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IN MEMORIAM JOHANNIS M<sup>c</sup> CAUL

UNIVERSITATIS COLLEGII APUD TORONTONENSES PRAESIDIS PRIMI

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ET OB DOLOREM COLLEGII CUM BIBLIOTHECA SUA

A:D:XV KAL:MART:AN:DOM:MDCCCXC

INCENDIO COMBUSTI;

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ERANT UNIVERSITATIS COLLEGIO DONO DEDERUNT HEREDES EJUS:

SCILICET UT BIBLIOTHECAM,

QUAM MAGNA EX PARTE IPSE OLIM VIVUS INSTITUISSET,  
EANDEM ETIAM MORTUUS ALIQUA TAMEN EX PARTE RESTITUERET.











HISTORY

OF ROMAN LITERATURE.

BY AUGUSTUS A. M.

AND J. A. M. M.

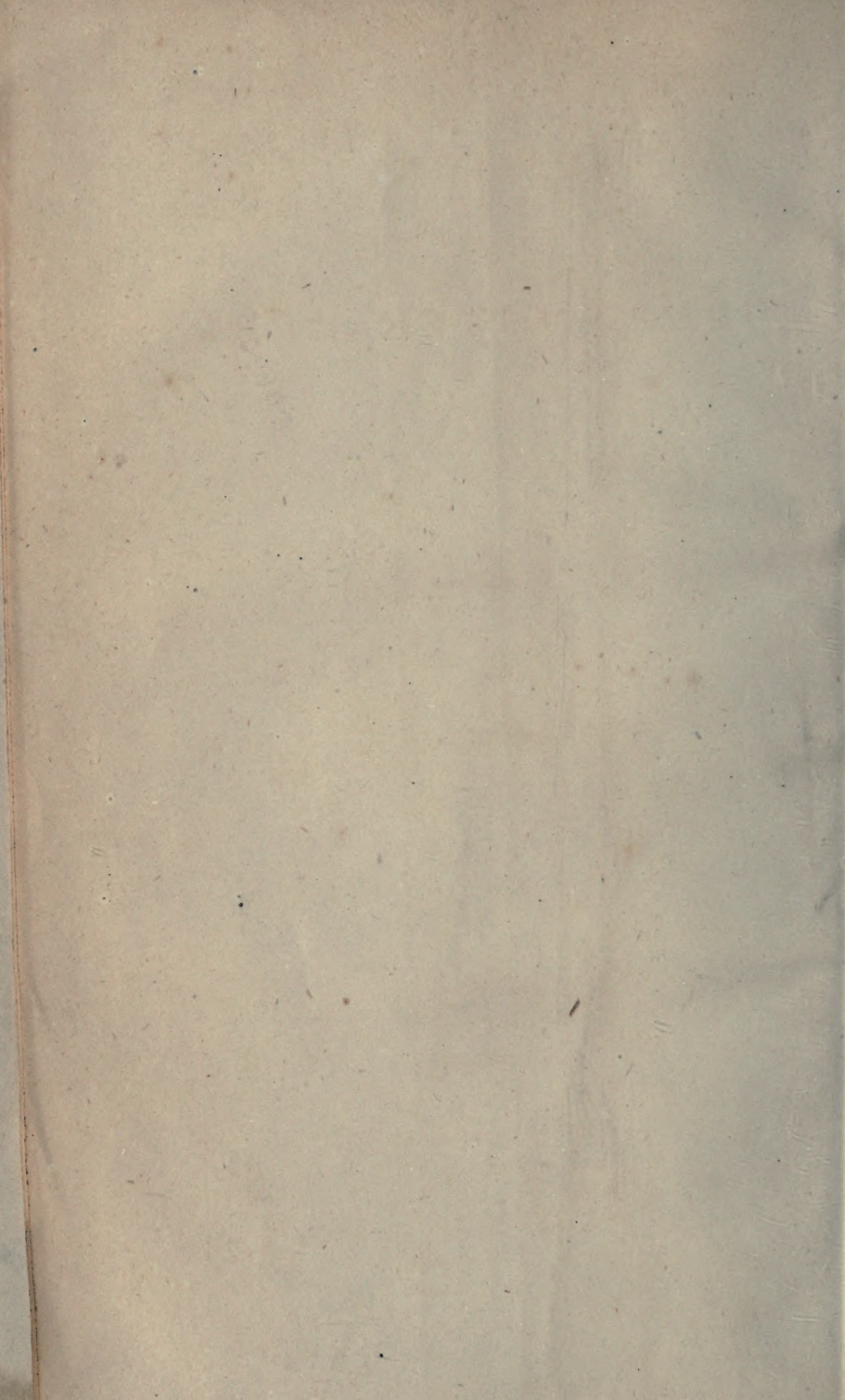
OF THE HISTORY OF LITERATURE.

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**HISTORY**  
OF  
**ROMAN LITERATURE,**  
DURING  
**THE AUGUSTAN AGE.**

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BY  
**JOHN DUNLOP, Esq.**

AUTHOR OF THE HISTORY OF FICTION.

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### ERRATA.

Page 188, last line, *for umina read lumina.*

Page 195, 4th line from bottom, *for care read cares.*

Page 223, line 8, *for idv read idv.*

Page 588, line 21, *for et read ut.*

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**HISTORY**  
**OF**  
**ROMAN LITERATURE, &c.**

**VOL. III.**

**A**







# HISTORY

OF

## ROMAN LITERATURE, &c.

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**T**HE Sun of Roman liberty set at Philippi ; but it had so long struggled amid sanguine clouds, that the night of despotism which followed was less dreadful than the bloody and disastrous glare it had shed since the days of Sylla.

The ruin of the Roman Republic had been prepared, *first*, by its extended dominion, which gave

its generals at a distance from the capital the disposal of armies; and *secondly*, by the dissensions between the higher and lower orders of the state, which afforded an opportunity to each ambitious leader to carry on his factious designs while assuming the plausible pretext of defending the laws from the encroachments of the hostile party.

At length, the total subversion of the Commonwealth, by Julius Cæsar, showed how much could be accomplished by the support of a faction in the city, and the power of an army, in a remote government, intrusted for a term of years to an aspiring commander. The authority, however, which Cæsar had usurped, was exerted by him for the reformation of abuses, and the remedy of those disorders to which Rome had so long been subject, and to which, perhaps, he alone was capable of applying a cure. But the measures which he was adopting to confirm his despotic power, and heal the distractions of the state, were quickly arrested by the vengeance of an ill-concerted conspiracy.

It is evident that the assassination of Cæsar was an unpopular act at Rome, except among the few remaining heads of the old Senatorian party. The armies and provinces were in the hands of his dependents, and Italy was thronged with his discharged veterans; yet the conspirators seem to have looked no farther than the death of Cæsar, and to have supposed, that when he was destroyed, the senate and people, without farther impediment, would resume their ancient forms and privileges. They had formed no definite



plan of ulterior operations: the blow which they had struck with the daring of men, was followed up with the imbecility of children,<sup>1</sup> and their country was in consequence overwhelmed with calamities more dreadful than those from which they had vainly hoped to rescue it.

There can be little doubt that Cæsar had intended his grand-nephew, Octavius, as his successor in the empire;<sup>2</sup> perceiving, probably, in that precocious youth the germ of those talents, which Sylla had foreseen in himself. Octavius had passed his boyhood in the family of his uncle; he had accompanied him to Spain, in the expedition against the sons of Pompey,<sup>3</sup> and had been sent by him, about six months before his death, to complete his education in the Greek city of Apollonia. It was there he first heard of the assassination of his protector; and he immediately set out for Rome, where he arrived a weakly student from the schools of Greece, in the most difficult and momentous crisis which had yet occurred in the history of his country. Before he could reach the capital, Antony had sufficient leisure to concert various measures calculated to secure his own power, and to possess himself of the whole public treasure, which had been amassed by Cæsar. Octavius, with one object ever in view, but veering about with wonderful dexterity in his professions, perceived, in a short while, that his

<sup>1</sup> Animis enim usi sumus virilibus; consiliis, mihi crede, puerilibus. Cicero, *Epist. ad Attic.* Lib. XV. ep. 4. ed. Schütz, Lips. 1816.

<sup>2</sup> Dio Cassius, Lib. XLV.

<sup>3</sup> Suetonius, *In Augusto*, c. 8.

only chance of success against this formidable opponent, was to place himself at the head of the Senatorian party, by whose aid he nearly ruined his dangerous rival at Modena. The Consuls, Hirtius and Pansa, having been slain in the memorable combats which were fought under the walls of that city, Octavius marched to Rome to demand the first magistracy of the state at the head of his army. Meanwhile, the reduced strength of Antony was recruited by the forces of Pollio, Plancus, and Lepidus, from Gaul and Spain. After this accession, it became apparent that Antony and Octavius were destined to form the preponderating powers in the commonwealth. They met near Bologna, where, along with Lepidus, they established the inauspicious triumvirate, and entered into a sanguinary convention, by which it was agreed to destroy the legal government—to put their mutual enemies to death—divide the lands of the richest towns and colonies in Italy among their soldiers—distribute the provinces of the Republic among themselves, and proceed in the following spring against Brutus and Cassius, who still upheld the party of the Commonwealth in Greece and Asia. These bloody and illegal designs were all fully accomplished. The former Triumvirs had wished only to obtain power; their successors had resentments to gratify, vengeance to exercise, and lawless troops to satiate. They massacred in cold blood the chiefs of the Republic who had remained in Italy; they overthrew its legions at Philippi; and Sextus Pompey, who, for some time after that fatal

combat, maintained by his naval power an image of the Commonwealth in Sicily, at length fell a victim to the jealousy and engrossing ambition of the triumviral tyrants.

But the blood which these usurpers had so profusely shed, did not cement their unhallowed alliance. So jarring were their interests, and so unprincipled their motives, that distrust and discord could hardly fail to arise among them. Antony, intoxicated with love, and wine, and power, was long watched by a sober and subtle rival. Various temporary, but ineffectual expedients, were tried to adjust their differences, and to heal the mutual jealousies and suspicions, which rankled in their bosoms. Lepidus was deprived of his share of sovereignty, without a blow: One blow hurled Antony from his sumptuous throne, and Octavius passed through the gates of Alexandria to the undisputed empire of the world.

When the genius of Octavius had thus successively triumphed over his adversaries, and when he remained without a rival, his counsels, and perhaps even his temper, changed. "There were," says Blackwell, "three very different periods in the life of Octavius. The first, on his early entering on business at his return from Apollonia, till the victory at Modena, during which, under the direction of Cicero, he acted the Roman and the patriot. The second, from his extorted consulship till the defeat of Antony, at Actium, when he played the tyrant and the triumvir; and the third, from the conquest of Egypt to the end



of his life, when he became first the prince, and then the parent of his country and people."<sup>1</sup>

Hitherto the palace of Octavius had resembled the head-quarters of a general, or citadel of a tyrant ; but, after his return from Egypt, it began to assume the appearance of a regular court, where everything was conducted with order, prudence, and moderation. Few citizens now survived, who had witnessed the golden days of the Republic, and all had felt the evils of its anarchy. The fear of new tumults extinguished the love of liberty, or checked at least all struggles to regain it. On the other part, Octavius felt that his interest was now identified with that of the state : he wished to enjoy in security the lofty prize he had gained, and to augment its value. Timidity had been the source of many of his crimes, but, having resolved to retain the government, he wisely thought it safest to be just and merciful. Military strength, he perceived, was an insufficient prop for his power. To render his authority permanent, he saw it was necessary to add the good opinion, or at least the affections, of the people. While, therefore, he bribed his soldiers with donations of money, or grants of land, he cajoled the populace with shows and entertainments,<sup>2</sup> and distributions of corn, which, by supporting them in idleness and dissipation, made them forget the state of political degradation into which they were fallen. The senators he soothed, by presenting them with the

<sup>1</sup> *Court of Augustus.*

<sup>2</sup> *Spectaculorum et assiduitate, et varietate, atque magnificentia, omnes antecessit. Sueton. In August. c. 43.*

flattering image of their ancient privileges, and the forms of the Republican government. Nothing was farther from his wish or intention, than that the commonwealth should be actually revived. Indeed, he could no more have restored it to its former state than he could have reanimated the corse of Cicero; and when advised by Agrippa to make the attempt, he prudently rejected a counsel which would probably have proved ruinous to himself, and came too late to be of service to his country. Yet while he determined to preserve the sovereign power, he resolved at the same time, by re-establishing ancient forms, to veil in part the hideous aspect of despotism. He was careful not to display his power by any external marks of royalty; and he exercised his authority not under any new title or magistracy, but as uniting in his person most of the ancient offices which were of weight or importance in the state. Servitude was thus established in the place of liberty; but a phantom in the shape of Freedom still frequented the Senate, and at the choice of Consuls yearly walked the Forum.

Octavius, however, (whom I shall hereafter style Augustus,) had recourse to more worthy arts than these, to endear his name and reign to the Roman citizens. He revived or enacted beneficial laws, and introduced the most provident regulations for the due maintenance of order and tranquillity. The police which he established, gave security to life and property in the capital and throughout Italy: the provinces were protected from the exactions and oppressions of their governors, under which they had so often groaned in

the days of the Republic. He bestowed even personally, an unremitting attention on the due administration of justice; and he used his best exertions to stem the overwhelming tide of luxury and moral corruption. His plans for the melioration of the state were aided by those wise counsellors by whom he was so long surrounded, till at length the blood-stained crafty Triumvir was hailed, during his life, as the father of his country, by the united voice of Senate and people, and left at his death the memory of a reign which has become proverbial for beneficence, clemency, and justice.

Among the various arts to which Augustus resorted to beguile the hearts of his people, and perhaps to render them forgetful of their former freedom, one of the most remarkable was, the encouragement which he extended to learning, and the patronage he so liberally bestowed on all by whom it was cultivated. To this noble protection of literature he was prompted not less by taste and inclination than sound policy; and in his patronage of the learned, his usual artifice had probably a smaller share than in those other parts of his conduct, by which he acquired the favourable opinion of the world. From infancy everything had contributed to give him a relish for learning, and a respect for the learned. His mother Atia, a woman of sense and prudence, had admirably regulated in his boyhood the education of her son. She herself spoke the Latin tongue with a purity resembling the language of Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi;<sup>1</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> "Facilius," says Cicero, "mulieres incorruptam antiquitatem



Augustus retained during life that urbanity of style and conversation to which he had been accustomed in his youth. The great Julius, by whom he had been adopted, was desirous, among other less laudable objects of ambition, to hold the first place in letters as well as in arms. Those daring adventurers, Antony, Curio, and Dolabella, were the instruments of his military power; but his private friends were Balbus, Matius, Hirtius, and Oppius, men who were all eminently accomplished—elegant in their mode of life, and fond of literary pursuits. Augustus had thus before him an example which he would naturally respect and imitate. His adoptive father placed around his destined heir the ablest instructors; and some time before his death sent him to Apollonia, a Corinthian colony in Illyria, where he assiduously studied morals under Athenodorus. He was ardently perusing the Grecian orators, and had made considerable progress in rhetoric, under Apollodorus, a distinguished master of eloquence, when he received intelligence of the assassination of Cæsar. The events which called him from Greece, and hurried him into the tumult of affairs, broke not his course of study. During that campaign against Antony, which terminated with the battle of Modena, not a day passed in which he did not read, write, and declaim.<sup>1</sup> He, at the same time, was constantly surrounded by men of literature and taste. After the victory at Modena, when he march-

conservant, quod multorum sermonis expertes, ea tenent semper, quæ prima didicerunt.”—*De Oratore*, Lib. III. c. 12.

<sup>1</sup> Sueton. *In August.* c. 84.

ed to Rome to demand the Consulship, he was accompanied by Cornelius Gallus and Mæcenas, who likewise followed him to Rome from Philippi; and on his first landing in Italy, after the victory he had there gained over Brutus, were his advisers in writing to the Senate in terms of moderation. Though Athens was hostile to the Cæsarian name, yet, when he visited it after the battle of Actium, he showed the city many marks of respect, and was initiated into the solemnities of its goddesses, Minerva and Ceres. When Egypt was subdued, he entered Alexandria, holding by the hand the philosopher Areius, who was a native of that city; and, in the harangue which he delivered to the inhabitants from his tribunal, he informed them that he spared their town, first, on account of the god Serapis; secondly, out of respect for the memory of its founder, Alexander the Great; and thirdly, for the sake of Areius, his own friend and their fellow citizen.<sup>1</sup>

After being firmly established without a competitor in the empire, Augustus still continued to prosecute his private studies with unremitting assiduity, and to reap from them the greatest advantages. When he perused a Greek or Latin author, he dwelt chiefly on what might be a lesson or example in the administration of public affairs, or in his own private conduct.—“*In evolvendis utriusque linguæ auctoribus,*” says Suetonius, “*nihil æque sectabatur, quam præcepta et exempla publice vel privatim salubria.*”<sup>2</sup> His literary tastes appear from the multitude of his

<sup>1</sup> Dio Cassius, Lib. LI.

<sup>2</sup> *In August.* c. 89.

Greek secretaries, his superintendants for the charge of his collection of statues and pictures, his copyists, and librarians. When wakeful through the night, he had a reader or a story-teller, like the eastern monarchs, who sat by him ; and he often continued listening, till he dropped asleep.<sup>1</sup> Among other embellishments which he bestowed on the city of Rome, he erected two public libraries ; the one called the Octavian, which stood in the portico of Octavia,<sup>2</sup> and the other on Mount Palatine, adjacent to the temple of Apollo.<sup>3</sup> From his own share of the spoils of the conquered towns in Dalmatia, he erected, at the Palatine library, a magnificent colonnade, with double rows of pillars ; the interstices of which were adorned with statues and pictures, executed by the chief Grecian masters. It was open below, but above it comprehended an extensive and curious library, with retiring rooms for private reading—public halls for reciting—schools for teaching—and, in short, every allurements and aid to study. Around were delightful walks, fitted for exercise or contemplation—some under shade, and others exposed to the sun, which could be alternately resorted to as the season of the year required. A colossal statue of Apollo in bronze, which was of Tuscan workmanship,<sup>4</sup> presided as the genius of the place, and no spot on earth could then have been dearer to the god—

<sup>1</sup> *In August.* c. 78.

<sup>2</sup> Dio Cassius, Lib. XLIX.

<sup>3</sup> Sueton. *in August.* c. 29.

<sup>4</sup> Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* Lib. XXXIV. c. 7.



“ Tum medium claro surgebat marmore templum,  
Et patriâ Phœbo carius Ortygiâ.”<sup>1</sup>

By advice of Mæcenas, he likewise provided means for the careful education of the Roman youth. In pursuance of his minister's recommendation, he, among other measures for promoting this design, transferred the School of Verrius Flaccus to the Palatine Library, and settled a large salary on that celebrated grammarian.<sup>2</sup> On literary men in general he lavished not merely pecuniary rewards and recompence, but paid them that attentive regard which they all court; and which, by raising their station in society, animates their exertions. Thus, when he was absent from the city, he never wrote to any of his own family or political advisers, without sending letters by the same opportunity to Atticus, to inform him in what place he was, how long he intended remaining in it, and what books he was engaged in reading. While he was at Rome, and unable from the multiplicity of affairs to enjoy the society of Atticus, he scarcely ever allowed a day to pass without proposing to him in writing some question on the subjects of antiquities, criticism, or poetry.<sup>3</sup> The commencement of his political career had indeed been somewhat inauspicious to the rising poets of his country. Virgil, Tibullus, and Propertius, all mourn the losses they had sustained during the rule of the Triumvirate. But Virgil had no sooner dis-

<sup>1</sup> Propert. *Eleg.* Lib. II. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Dio Cassius, Lib. LII. Funccius, *De Virili Ætate Linguae Latinæ*, c. i. § 10.

<sup>3</sup> Cor. Nepos, *Vit. Attici*, c. 20.

played his genius than his lands were restored ; while, to other poets, crowns were assigned, or statues were erected, as rewards and distinctions. They also frequently read their works in the presence of Augustus, and he willingly attended public recitations and discussions on literary topics—" *Ingenia seculi sui,*" says Suetonius, " *omnibus modis fovit. Recitantes et benigne et patienter audivit, nec tantum carmina, et historias, sed et orationes, et dialogos. Componi tamen aliquid de se, nisi et serio et a præstantissimis, offende-batur.*"<sup>1</sup>

As Augustus advanced in years, and became surrounded by his own short-lived descendants, and those of the Empress Livia by her former husband, all the younger members of the imperial family, who wished to gain his favour, distinguished themselves by their proficiency in polite literature ; and by the acquisition of elegant accomplishments. The uncommon attention which he paid to their instruction, and to the preservation of the purity of the Roman language, is evinced by one of his letters to his grandson, Caius Cæsar, quoted by Quintilian, in which he censures him for using the word *Calidus* instead of *Caldus*, not but what the former was Latin, but because it was unusual and pedantic.<sup>2</sup>

At the very close of life, when indisposition rendered him incapable of continued attention to business, or of long residence in the capital, he was carried in a litter to Præneste, Tibur, or Baiæ, through

<sup>1</sup> *In August.* c. 89.

<sup>2</sup> *Instit. Orat. Lib. I. c. 6.*

beautiful alleys, which terminated with the sea, or through odoriferous groves, which he himself had planted with myrtles and laurels, the shade of which was then considered salutary for the health. On these journeys he read the works of the poets whose genius he himself had fostered, and was constantly attended by philosophers, in whose conversation he found his chief solace. Even when on his deathbed at Nola, he passed his time and exercised his faculties, which he retained to the last moment, in philosophic conversations on the vanity and emptiness of all human affairs.

Augustus was besides an excellent judge of composition, and a true critic in poetry; so that his patronage was never misplaced, or lavished on those whose writings might rather have tended to corrupt than improve the taste and learning of the age. He was wont to laugh at the tinsel of that style which Mæcenas affected, at the laboured language of Tibullius, at Pollio's fondness for antiquated expressions, and the empty pomp of Asiatic eloquence which delighted Antony.<sup>1</sup> His own style was smooth, easy, and natural; he avoided all puerile or far-fetched thoughts, all affectation in the turn or disposition of his phrases, and all words not in general use. Perspicuity was his principal care; and whatever deviated in any shape from Nature, hurt the delicacy of his taste and judgment.<sup>2</sup> Aulus Gellius, in mention-

<sup>1</sup> Sueton. *In August.* c. 86.

<sup>2</sup> Genus eloquendi secutus est elegans et temperatum; vitatis sententiarum ineptiis atque inconcinnitate.—Sueton. *Ibid.*



ing the letters of Augustus to his grandson, Caius Agrippa, which he had just been reading, speaks with much delight and admiration of the simple, unlaboured elegance of the style in which they were written;<sup>1</sup> but he unfortunately quotes from them only a single passage.

This good taste of the Prince had the happiest effect on that of the age. No writer could hope for patronage or popularity, except by cultivating a style chaste and simple—which if ornamental, was not luxurious, or if severe, was not rugged or antiquated.

The Court of Augustus thus became a school of urbanity, where men of genius acquired that delicacy of taste, that elevation of sentiment, and that purity of expression, which characterise the writers of the age.

This extensive and judicious patronage of literature was attended with manifold political advantages to the Emperor. His poets palliated whatever was odious in his despotism, and his protection of philosophers was regarded by the people as a pledge or declaration, that he was resolved to govern with humanity and justice.

The pageantry of learning may originally have been but one of those many arts of government which Augustus practised so admirably that he inquired on his deathbed, If he had not well performed his part in the farce of life. But what commenced chiefly in artifice, though partly perhaps in inclination, tended ultimately to amend his own disposition and charac-

<sup>1</sup> *Noct. Attic. Lib. XV. c. 7.*

ter. The Emperor Julian insinuates, that an intercourse with those men of worth and learning by whom he was surrounded, mollified a heart by nature obdurate and unrelenting, and from which ambition seemed to have eradicated every feeling of compassion or tenderness. The productions of genius, with which he became acquainted, occupied the heart as well as the fancy ; and in a situation otherwise calculated to instil pride, jealousy, and distrust of mankind, served at once as an antidote to those evils which beset the possessor of a new raised throne, and opened the way to better dispositions. What prince could be conversant with the Epistles of Horace, and not receive a lesson of urbanity, or read the works of Virgil, without rising from the perusal more gracious and benign ?

From this temper of the monarch, considerable freedom of expression was allowed to the poets, whose verses often show, that, though the republic was subverted, the minds of the Romans were still in a great measure republican. The daring pretensions of a people to punish as well as to resist a tyrant, could not have been asserted with more energy by Milton himself, than by Virgil in his story of Mezentius and of his subjects' insurrection, which is approved both by the gods and the poet—

*Ergo omnis furiis surrexit Etruria justis ;  
Regem ad supplicium præsentì Marte repossunt, &c.*

With all his political virtues, sound judgment, and exquisite taste in literature, Augustus had some fol-

lies and weaknesses, which also exercised an influence on the literature of the age, and to which many things that we meet with, particularly in the works of the poets, must be referred. Thus their extravagant flattery in addressing him as a divinity, who had descended for a short while on earth and was about to resume his place in the celestial mansions, originated in his absurd and impious desire to be considered and even worshipped as a god. He began with deifying his adoptive father, Julius, who also had boasted that celestial blood flowed in his veins. In a funeral oration, pronounced for his aunt, Julius had alluded to his divine descent,<sup>1</sup> and he frequently gave *Venus Genetrix* as his word of battle. Seven days after his death, a comet had appeared, which was believed by the vulgar to be the soul of Cæsar, converted by Venus into a blazing star, and in that form received into Heaven.<sup>2</sup> Augustus, availing himself of this belief, placed a brazen statue of Cæsar in the Temple of Venus, with a star over its head.<sup>3</sup> His image was carried in procession with that of Venus, whenever intelligence of a victory was received, and supplications were decreed to him as a divinity. Hence the poetic incense offered to the manes of the deceased usurper, and Virgil's enumeration of the prodigies that had announced his death. The cool and reflecting head of Augustus did not preserve him from the influence of those extravagant and impious fancies, which, about the same period, induced Antony to as-

<sup>1</sup> Sueton. *In Jul. Cæs.* c. 6.    <sup>2</sup> Sueton. *In Jul. Cæs.* c. 88.

<sup>3</sup> Dio Cassius, Lib. XLV.



sume the character of Bacchus, and Sextus Pompey to bear the title and ensigns of the son of Neptune. While he affected to appear for a time on earth as the avenger of his adoptive parent, he was not unwilling it should be thought that his real father was a Greater than Octavius. A fable was circulated, which Augustus did not discountenance, with regard to his mother Atia and Apollo, resembling that which had been feigned concerning Olympias and Jupiter Ammon; and it gained such credit, that, as Suetonius informs us, some writers gravely asserted he was the son of Apollo.<sup>1</sup> The name of that divinity was the word of battle chosen by the Triumvirs at Philippi, and it was considered as an omen of the fate of Brutus, that, shortly before his death, he had involuntarily repeated the Homeric line,

Ἄλλα με μοῖρ' ὅλον καὶ Λητὺς ἔκτανεν υἱός.<sup>2</sup>

At an impious feast, held by Augustus in the beginning of his reign, he, with five of his courtiers, represented the six great celestial gods, while some of the ladies of his court personated the six great goddesses; and on this occasion, the Emperor himself, who was in fact uncommonly beautiful, chose to appear with the attributes of Apollo.<sup>3</sup> In his medals, the countenance of Augustus is what the Romans called an Apollinian face;<sup>4</sup> and Servius informs us, that there were statues of Augustus in Rome, which

<sup>1</sup> Sueton. *In August.* c. 94.    <sup>2</sup> Valer. Maximus, Lib. I. c. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Sueton. *In August.* c. 70.    <sup>4</sup> Spence's *Polymetis*.

represented him under the character, and with the emblems, of that bright divinity. We also learn, that because Apollo was usually represented with a flow of light beaming from the eyes, Augustus wished it to be supposed that his eyes likewise, which were really fine, darted forth so strong a brightness, as to dazzle those who looked on them too steadily or closely: “*Oculos habuit claros,*” says Suetonius, “*ac nitidos, quibus etiam existimari volebat inesse quoddam divini vigoris, gaudebatque si quis sibi acrius contuenti, quasi ad fulgorem solis, vultum submitteret.*” He also permitted his name to be inserted in the hymns to the gods. He at length became the object of private worship,<sup>1</sup> and at public festivals libations were poured out to him, as a tutelar deity of the empire.<sup>2</sup>

When a general obsequiousness to the will of Augustus prevailed at Rome, and the Senate had idolized him by its decrees, we cannot wonder that the poets of the court should have followed the example of the conscript fathers, or that Virgil and Horace should have represented him as a god, the avenger of Julius, descended from Heaven for a time, but soon about to resume his place among the constellations. This, it is true, might be, in some degree, conventional language. There are three topics which poets in all ages have treated somewhat in a similar manner—Devotion, Love, and Loyalty ; or rather, they have applied

<sup>1</sup> *Jurandasque tuum per nomen ponimus aras.*

*Horat. Epist. II. 1.*

<sup>2</sup> *E quibus ante omnes Augustum numen adora.*

*Ovid, Epist. e Ponto, III. 1.*

to the two latter feelings a set of expressions which have been borrowed from the former. The pliable nature, too, of ancient mythology, made the proffer of a godhead seem less ridiculous to the Romans than it appears to us. It admitted of local genii, and of deified heroes. Romulus, the Founder, had been early assumed among the number of the gods; and since the days of Ennius a system had been promulgated, and found credit in Rome, which taught that all the objects of vulgar worship were deified human spirits. Hence, a poet might the more readily venture to ask a beneficent prince, what sort of divinity he would become, if he would take his station in the heavens, rule the immense ocean, or preside in the realms below. The example, however, of Augustus was of unfortunate precedent in Latin poetry; and Nero and Domitian, though degraded by their vices below the ordinary level of the human species, were extolled in verse as constellations or demi-gods.

Towards the close of the reign of Augustus, and when Rome had enjoyed for nearly half a century the benign influence of his paternal government, the absurd adoration which had been paid to him changed into those mixed feelings of reverence and affection, the union of which, in modern times, has been termed loyalty, and for which *pietas* was the Latin expression. This sentiment towards the sovereign and his family, which prompts the subject to feel the wrongs of the monarch as his own, and, as such, to be ready at all hazards to avenge them, is frequently expressed in the works of the poets who flourished at the



end of Augustus' reign, both in reference to their own feelings and to those which prevailed among others—

Quæque tua est pietas in totum nomen Iûli,  
Te lædi, cum quis læditur inde, putas.<sup>1</sup>

Augustus, like Sylla, paid a sincere devotion to Fortune; and, accordingly, in the *Cæsars* of Julian, that deity admits, that he was the only prince who had been sincerely grateful to her. He repaired her temples, and omitted no opportunity of paying her honour. Hence, Horace's courtly Odes to Fortune, and a tone prevailing among the poets, as if it were more flattering to the vanity of a patron, that his wealth and power should have been acquired by her blind favour, than by his own talents or virtues.

Great, happy, and powerful, in the commencement of his reign, Augustus was, in his declining years, feeble, credulous, and unfortunate, at least in the interior of his palace. Domestic chagrins besieged his old age, and often wrung from his lips the melancholy line

Ἄλθ' ὄφελον ἀγάμος τ' εἶμεναι ἀγονος τ' ἀπολεσθαι.<sup>2</sup>

Hence, in the works of the poets there were, as Blackwell expresses it, “decencies to be observed, and distances to be kept.” Concerning many topics, there could not be the same freedom as in the days of Lucilius or Catullus. Some imprudent epigrams are said to have accelerated the melancholy fate of Cornelius

<sup>1</sup> Ovid, *Epist. ex Ponto*, Lib. II. Ep. 2. Ad. Messalinum.

<sup>2</sup> Sueton. *In August.* c. 65.

Gallus, and an offensive poem was made at least the pretext for the exile of Ovid.

The patronage of a prince, however liberal and judicious, can seldom of itself be sufficient essentially to promote the interests of literature ; but his example spreads among his courtiers and the Great of the land. Accordingly, there never was an age in which the learned were so rewarded and encouraged by statesmen, politicians, and generals, as that which grateful posterity has stamped with the name of Augustus. Its literature, more than that of any other period, was the result of patronage and court favour, and consequently we must expect to find in it those excellencies and defects which patronage and court favour are calculated to produce. Nothing can be more obvious than the advantages which the literature of a nation derives from men of elevated rank aiding its progress, and co-operating to promote its expansion. They remove the contempt which in rude ages has been sometimes felt for it, and the prejudices which, in more civilized states of society, have been frequently entertained against it. Their influence insensibly extends itself to each department of literature, and their countrymen learn to judge of everything, and to treat everything, as if they were all animated with a dignified and patrician spirit.<sup>1</sup> It is to this exalted patronage that Roman literature has been indebted for a large portion of its characteristic greatness, both of expression and of thought. On the other hand,

<sup>1</sup> Schlegel's *Lectures on Literature*, 3d.

those compositions, particularly the poetical, which have been produced by command of a patron, or with a view to merit his approbation, have always an air as if they had proceeded rather from premeditation than feeling or impulse, and appear to have been written, not as the natural expression of powerful emotions, but from the desire of favour, or at best of fame. When an author, too, depends solely on the patronage of exalted individuals, and not, as in modern times, on the support of the public, a spirit of servility and flattery is apt to infuse itself into his writings. Yet to this system of adulation we owe some of the sweetest lines of Tibullus, and most splendid passages of Virgil !

At the commencement of the reign of Augustus, the old Cæsarians, Balbus Matius, and Oppius, men who were highly accomplished, and had been the chief personal friends of the great Julius, still survived, and led the way in every species of learning and elegance. Their correspondence with Cicero, in his Familiar Epistles, exhibits much refinement in the individuals, and in general a highly polished state of society. They had a taste for gardening, planting, and architecture, and all those various arts which contribute to the embellishment of life. They rewarded the verses of poets, listened to their productions, and courted their society. When Augustus landed in Italy from Apollonia, Balbus was the first person who came to offer his services, and Matius took charge of the shows which he exhibited on his arrival at Rome. These ancient friends of the Julian line continued, during the early part of his reign, to frequent the court of Augustus ; and



though not first in favour with the new sovereign, they felt no jealousy of their successor, but lived on the most cordial and intimate terms with Mæcenas, who now held, near the person of the adopted son, the enviable place which they had occupied with the father.

To this favourite minister of Augustus the honour is due of having most successfully followed out the views of his master for promoting the interests of literature. Some writers have alleged that after the battle of Actium, a deliberate design was formed by Mæcenas to soften the heart of Augustus, and that, among the arts which he employed for this purpose, one of the chief was the encouragement of learned men and poets, who should imperceptibly give him lessons of moderation, and incline his heart to justice and clemency. But this is refining too much; and it seems more probable, that in his patronage of literature, Mæcenas merely acted from the orders, or followed the example, of his master.<sup>1</sup>

Caius Cilnius Mæcenas was descended, it is said, from Elbius Volterrenus, the last king, or rather Lucumon of the Etrurians, who perished in the 445th year of the city, at the battle near the Lake

<sup>1</sup> Wieland, in the introduction to his translation of Horace's epistles, has contended at considerable length, but with no great success, that the merits of Mæcenas, as a patron of literature, have been much overrated, and that, in his protection of Horace and Virgil, no uncommon exertion of generosity was displayed. He has been more fortunate in showing, that his voluptuous example tended to corrupt the manners of the superior classes of Roman citizens, and to introduce a higher style of luxury than had before prevailed.

Vadimona, which finally brought his country under total subjection to the Romans. His immediate ancestors were Roman knights, who, having been at length incorporated into the State, held high commands in the army,<sup>1</sup> and Mæcenas would never consent to leave their class to be enrolled among the Senators: but he was proud, (as may be conjectured, from its frequent mention by the poets,) of his supposed descent from the old Etrurain princes. It is not known in what year he was born, or in what manner he spent his youth; but Meibomius<sup>2</sup> conjectures, that he was educated at Apollonia along with Augustus and Agrippa; and that this formed the commencement of their memorable friendship. He is not mentioned in the history of his country, till we hear of his accompanying Augustus to Rome, after the battle of Modena. He was also with him at Philippi, and attended him during the whole course of the naval wars against Sextus Pompey, except when he was sent at intervals by his master to Rome, in order by his presence to quell those disturbances, which during this period frequently broke out in the capital. In the battle of Actium he commanded the light Liburnian galleys, which greatly contributed to gain the victory for Augustus, and he gave chase with them to Antony, when he fled after the galley of Cleopatra.

<sup>1</sup> Nec quòd avus tibi maternus fuit atque paternus,  
Olim qui magnis legionibus imperitârint.

Horat. *Sat.* Lib. I. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Mæcenas, sive de C. Mæcenatis Vitâ, Moribus, et Rebus Gestis, Liber Singularis*, Lugd. Bat. 1653. 4to.

During the absence of his master in Egypt, Mæcenas, in virtue of his office of Prefect, was intrusted with the chief administration of affairs in Italy, and particularly with the civil government of the capital.<sup>1</sup> After Augustus had returned from Egypt without a rival, and the affairs of the Empire proceeded in a regular course, Mæcenas shared with Agrippa the favour and confidence of his sovereign. While Agrippa was intrusted with affairs requiring activity, gravity, and force, those which were to be accomplished by persuasion and address, were committed to Mæcenas. The advice which he gave to Augustus in the celebrated consultation with regard to his proposed resignation of the empire, was preferred to that of Agrippa—Mæcenas having justly represented that it would not be for the advantage of Rome to be left without a head to the government, as the vast empire now required a single chief to maintain peace and order; that Augustus had already advanced too far to recede with safety; and that, if divested of absolute power, he would speedily fall a victim to the resentment of the friends or relatives of those whom he had formerly sacrificed to his own security.<sup>2</sup>

Having agreed to retain the government, Augustus asked and obtained from Mæcenas a general plan for its administration. His minister laid down for him rules regarding the reformation of the Senate—the nomination of magistrates—the collection of taxes

<sup>1</sup> Peto Albinovanus, *Epiced. Mæcen.*

<sup>2</sup> Dio Cassius.



—the establishment of schools—the government of provinces—the levy of troops—the equalization of weights and measures—the suppression of tumultuous assemblies, and support of religious observances. His measures on all these points, as detailed by Dio Cassius, show consummate political wisdom and knowledge in the science of government.

Mæcenas had often mediated between Antony and Augustus, and healed the mutual wounds which their ambition inflicted. But when his master had at length triumphed in the contest, the great object of his attention was to secure the permanence of the government. For this purpose, he had spies in all corners, to pry into every assembly, and to watch the motions of the people. By these means, the imprudent plots of Lepidus<sup>1</sup> and Muræna were discovered and suppressed, without danger or disturbance; and at length no conspiracies were formed. At the same time, and with a similar object, he did all in his power to render the administration of Augustus moderate and just; and as he perfectly understood all the weaknesses and virtues of his character, he easily bent his disposition to the side of mercy. While he himself, as Prefect of the city, had retained the capital in admirable order and subjection, he was yet remarkable for the mildness with which he exercised this important office, to which belonged the management of all civil affairs in the absence of the Emperor, the regulation of buildings, provisions, and commerce, and the cognizance of all crimes committed within a hundred miles of the

<sup>1</sup> Velleius Paterculus, *Hist. Roman.* Lib. II. c. 88.

capital. Seneca, who is by no means favourable in other respects to the character of Mæcenas, allows him a full tribute of praise for his clemency and mildness: "Maxima laus illi tribuitur mansuetudinis; pepercit gladio, sanguine abstinuit; nec ullâ aliâ re quid posset, quam licentiâ, ostendit."<sup>1</sup>

So sensible was Augustus of the benefits which his government derived from the counsels and wise administration of Mæcenas, and such his high opinion of his sagacity, fidelity, and secrecy, that everything which concerned him, whether political or domestic, was confided to this minister. Such, too, were the terms of intimacy on which they lived, that the Emperor, when he fell sick, always made himself be carried to the house of Mæcenas: So difficult was it to find repose in the habitation of a Prince!

During the most important and arduous periods of his administration, and while exercising an almost unremitting assiduity, Mæcenas had still the appearance of being sunk in sloth and luxury. Though he could exert himself with the utmost activity and vigilance, when these were required, yet, in his hours of freedom, he indulged himself in as much ease and softness as the most delicate lady in Rome.<sup>2</sup> He was moderate in his desire of wealth or honours; he was probably indolent and voluptuous by nature and inclination; and he rather wished to exhibit than conceal his faults. But the thundering applause, which,

<sup>1</sup> *Epist.* 114. ed. Lips. 1805.

<sup>2</sup> Velleius Paterculus, Lib. II. c. 88.

we are told by Horace, resounded through the theatre, when he first appeared in that place of public resort, after a long and severe indisposition,<sup>1</sup> evinces that his manners succeeded in gaining him popularity among his fellow-citizens. Dio Cassius also informs us, that he was beloved by those round the person of Augustus, to whose jealousy and envy he was more immediately exposed. That air of effeminate ease, which he ever assumed, was perhaps good policy, in reference both to the Prince and people. Neither could be jealous of a minister, who was apparently so careless and indifferent, and who seemed occupied chiefly with his magnificent villas and costly furniture. He usually came abroad with a negligent gait, and in a loose garb. When he went to the Theatre, Forum, or Senate, his ungirt robe trailed on the ground; and he wore a little cloak, with a hood like a fugitive slave in a pantomime. Instead of being followed by lictors or tribunes, he appeared in all public places attended by two eunuchs.<sup>2</sup> He possessed a magnificent and spacious villa on the Esquiline Hill, to which a tower adjoined,<sup>3</sup> commanding a view of all the hills of Rome and the surrounding country, in

<sup>1</sup> Horat. *Od.* Lib. II. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Senec. *Epist.* 114.

<sup>3</sup> It was inhabited by Tiberius for some time after his return to Rome from his long exile at Rhodes, (Sueton. *In Tiber.* c. 15.) From the summit of this tower the miserable Nero, who had enlarged the villa of Mæcenas to an imperial palace, is said to have surveyed the conflagration of Rome, enjoying the sight, and singing in a stage dress the destruction of Ilium. (Sueton. *In Nerone*, c. 38.)



different directions, as far as Tibur, Tusculum, and Præneste. The inner walls of this villa were of foreign marble, the ceiling glittered with gold, and the floors were of corresponding splendour. All the apartments were richly furnished. The tables were particularly costly, and of various forms. Having a passion for gems and pearls, Mæcenas had many jewellers and engravers in his employment, and his cabinet was adorned with all sorts of trinkets and precious stones, which his freedman Thalation had engraved and had set in gold.<sup>1</sup> Each chamber was likewise stored with precious ointments, and with every species of balsam, perfume, and essence, which might be refreshing or agreeable to the senses.

The Gardens of Mæcenas,<sup>2</sup> which surrounded the villa, were among the most delightful in Rome or its vicinity. The ground which was given to him by Augustus, to lay out in gardens, was previously the most unhealthy spot in the city. It had formerly been a burying place, where the bodies of slaves, and of those who had squandered their estates, were confusedly interred.<sup>3</sup> The air, in consequence, was unwholesome, and noxious to the whole town. But Mæ-

<sup>1</sup> Meibomius, *De Vit. Mæcen.* c. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Montfaucon, with many other antiquaries, place the site of Mæcenas' gardens between the Church of Santa Martina dei Monti and the Aggere Tarquinio; but the Abate Venuti, perhaps with more probability, thinks that they occupied the space which was afterwards in great part covered with the vast fabric of the Baths of Titus, and where now stands the Church of St Pietro ad Vincula.

<sup>3</sup> Horat. *Sat.* Lib. I. 8.

cenas converted this cemetery into a spot the most salubrious and delightful; adorning it with every species of rare and exotic plants, and forming walks, along which were placed statues of the most exquisite sculpture. Here, seated in the cool shade of his green spreading trees, whence the most musical birds constantly warbled their harmonious notes, he was accustomed to linger, and pay at idle hours his court to the Muses—

Pieridas Phœbumque colens in mollibus hortis,  
Sederat argutas garrulus inter aves.<sup>1</sup>

In one corner of this garden stood a temple to Priapus, where Mæcenas often resorted with his friends, who there recited, or inscribed on the walls, the verses which they had composed in honour of the productive god. These poems were written in the style supposed to be suitable to the divinity whom they celebrated.<sup>2</sup> Hence was formed the collection which derives its name from Priapus, and to which Tibullus, and even Virgil, are said to have contributed.

Being fond of change and singularity, the style of Mæcenas' entertainments varied. They were sometimes profuse and magnificent, at others elegant and private; but they were always inimitable in point of taste and fancy. He was the first person who introduced at Rome the luxury of young mules' flesh;<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pede Albinovanus, *Eleg.*

<sup>2</sup> Convenientes poetæ pro re et loco carmina affigebant.—Lil. Gyrard. *De Poet. Lat. Dialog.* IV.

<sup>3</sup> Pliny, *Hist. Nat. Lib.* VIII. c. 43.

his table was served with the most delicious wines, among which was one of Italian growth, and most exquisite flavour, called from his name Mæcenatianum;<sup>1</sup> and hence, too, the luxurious Trimalchio, who is the Magister Convivii in the Satyricon of Petronius Arbitrator, is called Mæcenatianus, from his imitating the style of Mæcenas' entertainments.

His sumptuous board was thronged with parasites, whom he also frequently carried about to sup with his friends,<sup>2</sup> and his house was filled by musicians, buffoons, and actors of mimes or pantomimes, with Bathyllus at their head. These were strangely intermingled in his palace with tribunes, clerks, and lictors. But there, too, were Horace, and Varius, and Valgius, and Virgil!

Of these distinguished poets, and of many other literary men, Mæcenas was, during his whole life, the patron, protector, and friend. Desert in learning never failed, in course of time, to obtain from him its due reward; and his friendship, when once procured, continued steady to the last. Poets, however, seem always to have enjoyed a preference; and the first place in his favour was justly held by those who ranked highest of their number. Had he not loved and cherished Virgil, posterity would perhaps have been

<sup>1</sup> Pliny, *Hist. Nat. Lib.* XIV. c. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Summus ego, et prope me Viscus Thurinus, et infra  
(Si memini) Varius, cum Servilio Balatrone  
Vibidius, quos Mæcenas adduxerat umbras:  
Nomentanus erat super ipsum; Porcius infra,  
Ridiculus totas simul absorbere placentas.

Horat. *Sat. Lib.* II. 8.



deprived of the chief works of the Mantuan bard, and would have known him only by his imitative Eclogues—

Ipse per Ausonias Æneia carmina gentes  
Qui canit, ingenti qui nomine pulsat Olympum,  
Mæoniumque senem Romano provocat ore,  
Forsitan illius nemoris latuisset in umbrâ  
Quod canit, et sterili tantùm cantasset avenâ,  
Ignotus populis, si Mæcenate careret.

It was Virgil who first introduced Horace to the notice of Mæcnas; and, though at first he paid no great attention to a young poet, as yet little distinguished by his works, and chiefly known as having fought in the republican ranks at Philippi, he admitted him at length among the number of his domestic friends—selected him as a companion in all his expeditions, whether of business or pleasure—procured for him the favour of the Emperor, and at length gave him the most substantial proofs of regard, by presenting him with a villa at Tibur, and obtaining for him a grant of a farm in the eastern district of the Sabine territory. Varius, who was the first tragic writer of his age, and, till the appearance of the Æneid, was accounted the greatest epic poet of Rome, and next in rank to Homer;<sup>1</sup> as also Domitius Marsus, the best epigrammatist since the time of Catullus,<sup>2</sup> were be-

<sup>1</sup> Et tamen haud uni patefecit limina vati,  
Nec sua Virgilio permisit numina soli  
Mæcnas: Tragico quatientem carmina cæstu  
Evexit Varium— *Panegy. In Pison.*

<sup>2</sup> Quid Varios Marsosque loquor, ditataque vatū  
Nomina? magnus erit quos numerare labor.  
Martial, Lib. VIII. Ep. 56.

friended and enriched by Mæcenas. Propertius, likewise, in his elegies, repeatedly acknowledges him as his protector, as the encourager and guide of his studies, and as the statesman to whose party and principles he had uniformly and steadily adhered.<sup>1</sup> Of the other writers and learned men whom he patronised, it will be sufficient to mention the names of the poets, C. Valgius and Plotius Tucca; of Areius, the Platonic philosopher; Fuscus Aristius, the grammarian; Heliodorus, the rhetorician; and Furnius, an elegant as well as faithful historian, whom Augustus raised to the consular dignity.<sup>2</sup> To these and many more the palace of Mæcenas was an asylum, where they were not only maintained and protected, but became the friends and companions of their illustrious host. They were introduced by him to his Prince as persons deserving of notice and royal munificence; they accompanied him to the banquets of the Great, and followed him in many excursions, both of pleasure and business. When he went to Brundisium, to negotiate a treaty between Augustus and Antony, he was attended on his journey by Horace, Varius, Virgil, and Heliodorus.

Among the distinguished men who frequented the house of Mæcenas, a constant harmony seems to have subsisted. They never occasioned uneasiness to each other; they were neither jealous nor envious of the favour and felicity which their rivals enjoyed. The noblest and most affluent of the number were without insolence, and the most learned without presumption.

<sup>1</sup> Eleg. Lib. III. el. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Meibomius, *De Mæcenat. Vit.* c. 18.

Merit, in whatever shape it appeared, occupied an honourable and unmolested station—

—— Domus hâc nec purior ulla est  
 Nec magis his aliena malis : nil mî officit unquam,  
 Ditior hic, aut est quia doctior : est locus uni  
 Cuique suus—(*Horat. Sat.*)

As Mæcenas extended such liberal patronage to the learned, it is not surprising that the greatest productions of the Augustan age should have been inscribed by their authors with his name, in testimony of their respect and gratitude. At the head of these glorious works stand the *Georgics* of Virgil, and *Satires* of Horace. Among books less known, or which have now perished, were several works of Cassius Severus ; a *Treatise on Gardening*, by Sabinus Tiro ; *Augustus' Memoirs* of his own life ; and the *Elegy* attributed to Albinovanus, which is inscribed to his memory.

Mæcenas is better known to posterity as a patron of literature than as an author ; but, living in a poetical court, and surrounded with poets, it was almost impossible that he should have avoided the contagion of versification. He wrote a tragedy, called *Octavia*, a poem, entitled *De Cultu*, and some Phæleucian and Galliambic verses. All these have perished, except a few fragments cited by Seneca and the ancient grammarians. To judge from these extracts, their loss is not much to be regretted ; and it is a curious problem in the literary history of Rome, that one who read with delight the works of Virgil and Horace should himself have written in a style so obscure and affected. The Roman critics have collected examples of uncom-



mon inversions in language from their poets and orators, which have found a place in their works of rhetoric; and Quintilian refers to many arrangements of words in the poems of Mæcenas, which he thinks not allowable even in verse. The effeminacy of his manners appears to have tainted his language: though his ideas were sometimes happy, his style was loose, florid, and luxuriant;<sup>1</sup> and he always aimed at winding up his periods with some turn of thought or expression which he considered elegant or striking. These conceits were called by Augustus his perfumed curls (*Calamistri*); and in one of that Emperor's letters, which is still preserved in Macrobius, he parodies the luxuriant and sparkling style affected by his minister.

Some idea of the mode of composition employed by Mæcenas, at least in his smaller poems, may be formed from the following lines, in which he describes a river, with the woods on its banks, and the boats sailing on it, in a manner almost unintelligible:—

<sup>1</sup> “*Oratio ejus*,” (says Seneca, in whose time all the works of Mæcenas were extant,) “*æque soluta est, quam ipse discinctus. Non tam insignita illius verba sunt, quam cultus, quam comitatus, quam domus, quam uxor? Magni ingenii vir fuerat, si illud egisset viâ rectiore, si non vitâset intelligi, si non etiam in oratione diffunderet. Videbis itaque eloquentiam ebrii hominis involutam, et errantem, et licentiæ plenam.*” And again.—“*Hoc istæ ambages compositionis, hoc verba transversa, hoc sensus, magni quidem sæpe, sed enervati dum exeunt, cuius manifestum facient.*” (*Epist.* 114.) And in another epistle he says: “*Ingeniosus vir ille fuit, magnum exemplum Romanæ eloquentiæ daturus, nisi illum enervâset felicitas, immo castrâset.*” (*Epist.* 19.)

Amne sylvisque ripa comantibus,  
Vides, ut alveum lintribus arent,  
Versoque vado remittant hortos.<sup>1</sup>

Or from the verses addressed to Horace, in which he declares that he is so grieved for the absence of the poet, that he has become careless, even concerning those gems for which he once had such an inordinate passion :

Lūgens, O mea vita, te, Smaragdos  
Beryllos neque, Flacce, nec nitentes  
Nuper, candida Margarita, quæro,  
Nec quos Thynica lima perpolivit  
Anellos, nec Jaspios Lapillos.

One good and energetic line of his composition is preserved and applauded by Seneca :

Nec tumultum curo, sepelit natura relictos.<sup>2</sup>

Mæcenas continued to govern the state, to patronise good poets, and write bad verses, for a period of twenty years. During this long space of time, the only interruption to his felicity was the conduct of his wife Terentia. This beautiful but capricious woman was the sister of Proculeius, so eminent for his fraternal love, as also of Licinius Muræna, who conspired against Augustus ; and she is supposed by some, though I think erroneously, to be the Licymnia whom Horace celebrates for her personal charms and accomplishments, and for the passion with which she had inspired his patron. The extravagance and bad temper

<sup>1</sup> Senec. *Epist.* 114.

<sup>2</sup> Id. *Ep.* 92. Fin.

of this fantastical, yet lovely woman, were sources of perpetual chagrin and uneasiness to her husband. Though his existence was embittered by her folly and caprice, he continued during his whole life to be the dupe of the passion which he entertained for her. He could neither live with nor without her ; he quarrelled with her, and was reconciled, almost every day, and put her away one moment, to take her back the next, which has led Seneca to remark, that he was married a thousand times, yet never had but one wife.

Terentia vied in personal charms with the Empress Livia, and is said to have gained the affections of Augustus. She accompanied her husband and the Emperor on an expedition to Gaul, in the year 738, which, at the time, was reported to have been undertaken in order that Augustus might enjoy her society without attracting the notice or animadversions of the capital.<sup>1</sup> Mæcenas was not courtier enough to appear blind to the infidelities of Terentia, or to sleep for the accommodation of the Emperor, as the Senator Galba is said to have slumbered for the minister. The umbrage Mæcenas took at the attentions paid by his master to Terentia, is assigned by Dio Cassius as the chief cause of that decline of imperial favour, which Mæcenas experienced about four years previously to his death. For although he was still treated externally with the highest consideration, though he retained all the outward show of grandeur and interest, and still continued to make an yearly present to the Emperor on the anniversary of his birth-day, he was no longer

<sup>1</sup> Dio Cassius, Lib. LIV.



consulted in state affairs as a favourite or confident. Others have supposed, that it was not the intrigue of Augustus with Terentia which diminished his influence, but a discovery made by the Emperor, that he had revealed to his wife some circumstances concerning the conspiracy in which her brother Muræna had been engaged. Suetonius informs us, he had felt some displeasure on that account; but Muræna's plot was discovered in the year 732, and the decline of Mæcenas's political power cannot be placed earlier than 738. The disgust conceived by masters when they have given all, and by favourites who have nothing more to receive, or are satiated with honours,<sup>1</sup> may partly account for the coldness which arose between Augustus and his minister. But the declining health of Mæcenas, and his natural indolence, increasing by the advance of years, afforded of themselves sufficient causes for his gradual retirement from public affairs. His constitution, which was naturally weak, had been impaired by effeminacy and luxurious living. He had laboured from his youth under a perpetual fever;<sup>2</sup> and for many years before his death, he suffered much from watchfulness, which was greatly aggravated by his domestic chagrins. Mæcenas was fond of life and enjoyment; and of life even without en-

<sup>1</sup> Idque et Mæcenati acciderat; fato potentiae rarò sempiternæ: an satias capit, aut illos, cùm omnia tribuerunt, aut hos, cùm jam nihil reliquum est quod cupiant.—Tacit. *Annal.* Lib. III. c. 30.

<sup>2</sup> “Quibusdam,” says Pliny, “perpetua febris est, ut C. Mæcenati: eidem triennio supremo nullo horæ momento contigit somnus.”—*Hist. Nat.* Lib. VII. c. 51.

joyment.<sup>1</sup> Hence, he anxiously resorted to different remedies for the cure or relief of this distressing malady. Wine, soft music sounding at a distance, and various other contrivances, were tried in vain.<sup>2</sup> At length, Antonius Musa, the imperial physician, who had saved the life of Augustus, but accelerated the death of Marcellus, obtained for him some alleviation of his complaint, by means of the distant murmuring of falling water. The sound was artificially procured at his villa on the Esquiline Hill. But during this stage of his complaint, Mæcnas resided principally in his villa at Tibur, situated on the banks of the Anio, and near its celebrated cascades. The chief falls of the Anio were heard at the villa, but there were also a number of jets, formed by the streams which flowed down the hill on which the palace of Mæcnas stood aloft. "Mæcnas' villa," says Eustace, "stands at the extremity of the town, on the brow of the hill, and hangs over several streamlets, which fall down the steep. It commands a noble view of the Anio and its vale beneath, the hills of

<sup>1</sup> He confesses, in some verses preserved by Seneca, that he would wish to live even under every accumulation of physical calamity:—

Debilem facito manu,  
 Debilem pede, coxâ ;  
 Tuber adstrue gibberum,  
 Lubricos quate dentes :  
 Vita dum superest, bene est.  
 Hanc mihi, vel acutâ  
 Si sedeam cruce, sustine.

Senec. *Epist.* 101.

<sup>2</sup> Seneca, *De Providentiâ*, Lib. III.

Albano and Monticelli, the Campagna, and Rome itself, rising on the borders of the horizon. A branch of the river pours through the arched gallery and vaulted cellars, and shaking the edifice as it passes along, rushes in several sheets down the declivity."<sup>1</sup> This was indeed a spot to which Morpheus might have sent his kindest dreams; and the pure air of Tibur, with the streams tumbling into the valley through the arches of the villa,<sup>2</sup> did bestow on the worn-out and sleepless courtier some few moments of repose.<sup>3</sup>

But all these resources at length failed. The nervous and feverish disorder, with which Mæcenas was afflicted, increased so dreadfully, that for three years before his death he never closed his eyes. In his last will, he recommended Horace, in the most affectionate terms, to the protection of the Emperor: "Horatii Flacci, ut mei, memor esto." He died in 745, in the same year with Horace,<sup>4</sup> and was buried in his own

<sup>1</sup> *Classical Tour*, Vol. II. c. 7, 8vo ed.

<sup>2</sup> Meantime unnumber'd glittering streamlets play'd,  
And hurled everywhere their waters sheen,  
That as they bicker'd ceaseless through the glade,  
Though restless still themselves, a lulling murmur made.

<sup>3</sup> The villa of Mæcenas has been recently converted into an iron foundry.—*Mementos of a Tour in Italy*, in 1821-2.

<sup>4</sup> It has been disputed whether Horace or Mæcenas died first. It was long the commonly received opinion, that Mæcenas had predeceased Horace, and that the words, "Horatii Flacci, ut mei, memor esto," had been, as Suetonius informs us, addressed by him person-



gardens on the Esquiline Hill. He left no child, and in Mæcenas terminated the line of the ancient Etrurian Princes. But he bequeathed to posterity a name, immortal as the arts of which he had been through life the generous protector, and which is deeply inscribed on monuments, that can only be destroyed by some calamity fatal to civilization.

Mæcenas had nominated Augustus as his heir, and the Emperor thus became possessed of the Tiburtine Villa, in which he passed a great part of the concluding years of his reign. The death of his old favourite revived all the esteem which Augustus had once entertained for him; and many years afterwards, when stung with regret at having divulged the shame of his daughter Julia, and punished her offence, he acknowledged his irreparable loss, by exclaiming, that he would have been prevented from acting such a part had Mæcenas been still alive. So difficult was it to repair the loss of one man, though he had millions of subjects under his obedience. "His legions," says Seneca, "being cut to pieces, he recruited his troops—his fleet, destroyed by storms, was soon refitted—public edifices, consumed by the flames, were rebuilt with greater magnificence; but he could find no one capable of discharging the offices which

ally, and while on his death-bed, to Augustus. The more modern opinion is, that Horace died before Mæcenas, and that these words had not been addressed to Augustus, but had been inserted in the testament of Mæcenas, and were not erased during the short time that he survived his poetical friend.

had been held by Mæcenas, with equal integrity and ability."

During the Augustan age, poets and learned men were protected by persons of every character—not less by the proud, overbearing, energetic Pollio, than the mild and voluptuous Mæcenas.

Though of humble birth, Caius Asinius Pollio was one of the most remarkable men, and most distinguished patrons of literature, during the age in which he lived; and when we consider the brilliant part which he acted as a military commander, politician, and man of letters, it is singular we have so few remains of his writings, and such brief records of his actions.

Pollio was born in the 675th year of the city, and he had consequently reached the age of thirty before the liberties of his country were subverted. During the times of the republic, he so well performed the parts of a citizen and patriot, that in one of Cicero's letters he is classed with Cato for his love of liberty and virtue.<sup>1</sup> But in pursuing this line of conduct, he offended some of the partizans of Pompey, and was forced, as he afterwards alleged, to espouse the part of Cæsar, in order to shield himself from their resentment.<sup>2</sup>

He became a favourite officer of Julius Cæsar, whom he served with inviolable fidelity, and ever en-

<sup>1</sup> Quintus filius mirus civis ! ut tu Catonem vel Asinium dicas.

<sup>2</sup> Cicero, *Epist. Famil.* Lib. X. 31.

tertained for him the most devoted attachment. A short while before the dictator's death, he was sent to Spain at the head of a considerable army, to crush the party which Sextus Pompey had recently formed in that province ; but he was not very successful in his prosecution of this warfare.<sup>1</sup> After the assassination of Cæsar, he offered his army and services to the Senate ; and in his letters to Cicero, made the strongest professions of love of liberty, and zeal for the interests of the commonwealth, declaring that he would neither desert nor survive the republic.<sup>2</sup> The hypocrisy of these protestations was evinced almost as soon as the letters in which they were contained had reached the capital ; for his old fellow-soldier, Antony, having retreated into Gaul after his defeat at Modena, Pollio joined him from Spain, with all the troops he commanded. He farther contrived to disunite the fickle Plancus from his colleague, Decimus Brutus, and to bring him over with his army to the enemies of the republic. By these measures, he contributed more, perhaps, than any other of his contemporaries to extinguish all hopes of the restoration of the commonwealth, and to throw the whole power of the state into the hands of the triumvirate. Having thus been chiefly instrumental in ruining the cause of liberty, that proud spirit of freedom, or *ferocia*, as Tacitus calls it, which he afterwards assumed, and his restoration of the *Atrium libertatis*, which stood on the Aventine Hill, must have been looked on as a farce

<sup>1</sup> Dio Cassius, Lib. XLV.    <sup>2</sup> Cicero. *Epist. Famil.* Lib. X. 33.



by his fellow-citizens, and has been considered by posterity as little better than imposture.

Pollio was present at the formation of the triumvirate, which took place in a small island of the Reno, a stream that passes near Bologna. Amid other sacrifices of friends and relatives then made by the heads of political parties, Pollio gave up his own father-in-law to the resentment of his new associates. He is said, however, to have repressed by his authority many disorders of the times, and to have mitigated, so far as was in his power, the cruelty of the triumvirs. In the year 713, which was that of his first consulship, a quarrel having arisen between Augustus and Lucius Antonius, the brother of the triumvir, concerning the settlement of the veterans in the lands allotted them, Pollio occupied the north of Italy for the Antonian party. His spirit and valour had acquired him such reputation among the soldiery, that while his friend Munatius Plancus, though of higher birth and rank, was deserted by his troops, Pollio was enabled to make head against Agrippa and Augustus, with not less than seven legions, and to retain the whole Venetian territory in the interests of Antony. In order to subsist his forces, he laid heavy contributions on the towns, and exacted them with the utmost rigour. The Paduans, in particular, who had been always attached to the cause of liberty and the republic, smarted severely under his displeasure and avarice. He stripped their city of everything that was valuable, whether public or private, and proclaimed a

reward to the slave who should discover the concealment of his master.

The contest between Lucius Antonius and Augustus was followed by the treaty of Brundisium, by which a new division of the empire was made among the triumvirs; and according to this distribution, the province of Dalmatia was included in the department of the empire allotted to Marc Antony. This rugged country, not yet completely subdued by the Romans, had been constantly in the view of Pollio, while he commanded on the north-east coast of Italy. A massacre committed by the natives on a Roman colony, formed a pretext for its invasion. With the consent of Antony, if not by his express orders, Pollio led the army, which he had now commanded for five years, to quell the insurrection. He quickly dispersed the tumultuary bodies of natives which had assembled to oppose him; he took their capital, Salona, (now Spalatro,) and returned triumphant to Rome.

This triumph closed his military and political career. The cause of Antony, which Pollio had supported both by his able conduct and the reputation of his name, had now sunk so low in Italy, that it could no longer be maintained against his rival with any regard to safety, interest, or character. He declined, however, to follow Augustus to the battle of Actium; and to the solicitations which were used, with the view of inducing him actively to espouse his interests, Pollio is said to have replied, "*Mea in Antonium majora merita sunt, illius in me beneficia notiora;*

itaque discrimine vestro me subtraham, et ero præda victoris.”<sup>1</sup>

From this period till his death, (which happened at his Tusculan villa in 755, when he had reached the age of eighty,) Pollio withdrew almost entirely from public affairs. He was naturally of a bold, assuming, and overbearing temper: He affected a stern predilection for the forms and manners of the ancient republic; and having amassed an enormous fortune during the proscriptions, he never sought to ingratiate himself with Augustus. Accordingly, though he was respected and esteemed, he was not beloved by the emperor. During the contest with Lucius Antonius, several stinging epigrams were directed against him by Augustus. Pollio was well able to retort; but he did not choose, as he himself expressed it,—“in eum scribere qui potest proscribere.”<sup>2</sup> His neutrality during the war with Antony and Cleopatra, though permitted by Augustus, would little tend to conciliate his favour; and that prince saw around him so many able ministers, who had uniformly supported his interests, that he had no occasion to require the assistance or counsel of Pollio.

With exception, therefore, of occasionally pleading in the Forum, Pollio devoted all his time to literary composition, and the protection of literary men. No Roman, of that period, was more capable of enjoying retirement with dignity, or relishing it with taste.

<sup>1</sup> Velleius Paterculus, Lib. II. c. 86.

<sup>2</sup> Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, Lib. II. c. 4.



He possessed everything which could render his retreat delightful—an excellent education, distinguished talents, a knowledge of mankind, and a splendid fortune. To all the strength and solidity of understanding requisite to give him weight in the serious or important affairs of life, he united the most lively and agreeable vein of wit and pleasantry. His genius and acquirements enabled him likewise to shine in the noblest branches of polite literature,—poetry, eloquence, and history, in which last department Seneca prefers his style to that of Livy. He had, no doubt, effectually improved the opportunities which the times afforded, of enriching himself at the cost of others; and no one had profited more by the forfeited estates during the period of the proscriptions: but it should not be forgotten, that whatever fortune he amassed was converted to the most laudable purposes—the formation of a public library—the collection of the most eminent productions of art, and the encouragement of learning and literary men.

Pliny, in his Natural History, informs us, that Pollio was the first person who erected a public library at Rome. It was placed in the vicinity of the *Atrium Libertatis*, which he had constructed on the Aventine Hill; and the expense of the establishment was defrayed from the spoils of conquered enemies.<sup>1</sup> From the same author, we have an account of his fine collection of statues by Praxiteles, and other masters,<sup>2</sup> which he was extremely desirous should be publicly

<sup>1</sup> Lib. VII. 30.—XXXV. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.* XXXVI. 5.

seen and commended. Among the labours of Praxiteles, are mentioned a Silenus, an Apollo, a Neptune, and a Venus. The specimens of the works of other artists exhibited the Centaurs carrying off the Nymphs, by Archesitas—Jupiter, surnamed Hospitalis, by Pamphilus, a scholar of Praxiteles—a sitting Vesta, and, finally, Zetus, Amphion, and Dirce, fastened by a cord to the bull, all formed out of one stone, and brought from Rhodes by the directions of Pollio.

Still more useful and praiseworthy was the patronage which he extended to men of genius. In youth, his character and conversational talents had rendered him a favourite with the master-spirits of Rome,—Cæsar, Calvus, and Catullus, who shone in his earlier years;<sup>1</sup> and in more advanced life, he in turn favoured and protected Virgil and Horace, whose eulogies are still the basis of his fame.

Pollio commanded in the district where the farm of Virgil lay; and at the division of lands among the soldiery, was of service to him in procuring the restoration of his property. That distinguished poet composed his eclogues, it is said, by the advice of Pollio; and in the fourth of the number, he has beautifully testified his gratitude, for the friendship and protection which had been extended to him. The odes

<sup>1</sup> De Pollione Asinio, seriis jocisque pariter accommodato, dictum est, Esse eum omnium horarum.—Quintil. *Inst. Orat.* Lib. V. c. 4.

————— Est enim leporum

Disertus puer ac facetiarum.

Catulli *Carmina*.

of Horace show the familiarity which subsisted between the poet and his patron;—the former ventures to give the latter advice concerning the history of the civil wars, on which he was then engaged; and to warn him of the danger to which he might be exposed by treating such a subject.

Timagenes, the rhetorician and historian, spent his old age in the house of Pollio: Nor did it deprive him of Pollio's protection that he had incurred the displeasure of Augustus, by some bitter raillery and sarcasms directed against the imperial family.

But while Pollio protected learned men, he seems to have been a severe, and, according to some, a capricious critic, on the writings both of his own contemporaries, and of authors who had immediately preceded him. He was envious of the reputation of Cicero, and expressed himself with severity on the blemishes of his style:<sup>1</sup> he called in question the accuracy of the facts related in Cæsar's Commentaries;<sup>2</sup> he condemned the style of Sallust as vicious and affected;<sup>3</sup> and he discovered provincial expressions in the noble history of Livy.<sup>4</sup> His jealous love of praise, and spirit of competition, led him to introduce one custom which probably proved injurious to poetry—the fashion of an author reading his productions at private meetings of the most learned and refined of his contemporaries. These recitations, as they were called, led to the desire of writing for the sake of effect, and were less calcu-

<sup>1</sup> Seneca, *Suasoriæ*, VI. Quintil. *Inst. Orat. Lib. XII. c. 1.*

<sup>2</sup> Sueton. *In Jul. Cæsar. c. 56.*    <sup>3</sup> Idem *de Illust. Grammat.*

<sup>4</sup> Quintil. *Inst. Orat. Lib. I. c. 5.*



lated to improve the purity of taste, than to engender ostentatious display.

Messala Corvinus vied with Pollio in his liberal encouragement of men of letters. But while he emulated him in the acquisition of all the knowledge and accomplishments of the age, as also in the patronage of learning, he was a man of a totally different and far more amiable temper. His disposition, observes Crevier, while contrasting their characters, was as mild and gentle as that of Pollio was hot and violent;<sup>1</sup> his sweetness of temper, it is said, influenced even his style, which possessed more grace than energy.

History has preserved a number of authentic and interesting, though dispersed, facts concerning the middle period of the life of the great Messala. Few particulars, however, are known concerning his early life, or the dark close of his existence.

The mere recital of his names, Marcus Valerius Messala Corvinus, declares the antiquity and nobility of his family; but the year of his birth is not ascertained. He is said, in the Eusebian chronicle, to have been born in 694; but if that date be correct, he would only have reached the age of seventeen when he joined the republican standard at Philippi. He acted, however, a prominent part in that battle, and after it was lost, he was offered the command of the dispersed forces of the commonwealth. It is not, therefore, likely, that he was younger than twenty-one

<sup>1</sup> *Histoire des Empereurs Romains depuis Auguste jusqu' à Constantin.*

at this period ; and his birth consequently ought not to be fixed later than the year 690.

In his youth he studied for a short while at Athens, along with the son of Cicero. After his return to Rome, his name having appeared in the roll of the proscribed by the nomination of Antony, he fled from Italy, and sought refuge with the army of Brutus and Cassius. Previous, however, to the battle of Philippi, his name, along with that of Varro, was erased from the fatal list, on the plea that he had not been in Rome at the time of Cæsar's murder. Varro accepted the proffered pardon, and retired to his studies and his books, among which he soon after died in the ninetieth year of his age ; but it was indignantly rejected by Messala, who steadily adhered to the cause of the commonwealth. The night before the battle of Philippi he supped in private with Cassius in his tent. That chief had wished to protract the war, and opposed himself to the general wish which prevailed in the army to hazard the fortunes of the republic on one decisive battle. At parting for the night, he grasped Messala by the hand, and addressing him in Greek, called him to bear witness that he was reduced to the same painful necessity as the great Pompey, who had been reluctantly forced to stake on one throw the safety of his country.

On the following day, so fatal to the liberties of Rome, Messala commanded one of the best legions in the army of Brutus. After the second defeat at Philippi, he escaped to Thasus, an island in the Ægean Sea. He was there invited to place himself at the

head of the remains of the republican party. But Messala probably considered the cause of the commonwealth as now utterly hopeless. He accordingly listened to the persuasions of Pollio, who undertook to reconcile him to the conquerors, and to preserve the lives of those who should surrender under his command. Antony passed over to Thasus, and with great appearance of cordiality, received Messala, as well as some of his friends, into favour, and in return was put in possession of the stores which had been amassed in that island for the wreck of the republican forces. Having now joined the arms of Antony, he accompanied him in the dissolute progress which he made through the Roman dominions in Asia, when he received the homage of the tributary kings, and settled their disputes. Messala, from his earliest youth, had been a distinguished orator, and in that capacity he sometimes spoke before Antony in favour of an accused tetrarch, or of an injured people.

At length, however, the scandalous and infatuated conduct of Antony, and the comparative moderation of Augustus, induced Messala to transfer his services to the latter, whom he continued to support during the remainder of his life. In the naval war with Sextus Pompey, he was second in command under Agrippa, and on one occasion, during his absence, had the supreme direction of the fleet. In the course of this contest, he was also for some time stationed with an army on the Neapolitan shore; and Augustus, having been not only defeated but shipwrecked in one of the many naval engagements which he fought with



Pompey, sought shelter in the most wretched condition in the camp of Messala, by whom he was received as a friend and master, and treated with the tenderest care.

The death of Sextus Pompey at length opened both sea and land to his successful adversary, and it was quickly followed by the long-expected struggle for superiority between Antony and Augustus.

Messala was consul in 721, the year of the battle of Actium, in which he bore a distinguished part. After that decisive victory, and the firm establishment of the throne of Augustus, he lived the general favourite of all parties, and the chief ornament of a court, where he still asserted his freedom and dignity. While at Rome, he resided in a house on the Palatine Hill, which had formerly belonged to Marc Antony;<sup>1</sup> but he was frequently absent from the capital on the service of the state. War after war was intrusted to his conduct, and province after province was committed to his administration. In some of his foreign expeditions, he was accompanied by the poet Tibullus, who has celebrated the military exploits of Messala in his famed panegyric, and his own friendship and attachment to his patron in the Elegies.

The triumph which Messala obtained in 727, for his victories in a Gallic campaign, completed the measure of his military honours; and he filled in succession all the most important civil offices of the state. Besides holding the Consulship in 721, he was elect-

<sup>1</sup> Cramer's *Description of Ancient Italy*, Vol. I. p. 452.

ed into the college of Augurs, and was intrusted with the superintendence of the aqueducts, one of those great public works for which Rome has been so justly celebrated. In 736, on occasion of the absence of Augustus and Mæcenâs from the capital, he was nominated prefect of the city ; but he resigned that situation a few days after his appointment, regarding it as inconsistent with the ancient constitution of his country. He is also believed to have been the person, who, by command of the conscript fathers, first saluted Augustus in the Senate-house as the father of his country ; a distinction which was bestowed in a manner that drew tears from the master of the Roman world,<sup>1</sup> and a reply, in which he declared, that having attained the summit of his wishes, he had nothing more to desire from the immortal gods but a continuance of the same attachment till the last moments of his life.

From this period the name of Messala is scarcely once mentioned by any contemporary writer. He survived, however, ten or twelve years longer. Tiberius Cæsar, who was then a youth, fond of the liberal arts, and by no means ignorant of literature, paid Messala, when in his old age, much deference and attention, and attempted to imitate his style of oratory.<sup>2</sup> Towards the close of his life, he was dreadfully afflicted with ulcers in the *sacra spina* ;<sup>3</sup> and it is said, that, two years before his death, he was deprived of both

<sup>1</sup> Sueton. *In August.* c. 58.

<sup>2</sup> Sueton. *In Tiber.* c. 70.

<sup>3</sup> Funccius, *de Viril. Ætat. Ling. Lat.* pars II. c. 1. § 12.

sense and memory. He at length forgot his own name,<sup>1</sup> and became incapable of putting two words together with meaning. It is mentioned in the Eusebian chronicle, that he perished by abstaining from food when he had reached the age of seventy-two; but if he was born in 690, as is supposed, this computation would extend his existence till the close of the reign of Augustus, which is inconsistent with a passage in the dialogue, *De Causis Corruptæ Eloquentiæ*, where it is said,—“Corvinus in medium usque Augusti principatum, Asinius penè ad extremum duravit.” Now, the middle of the reign of Augustus cannot be fixed later than the year 746, when Messala could only have reached the age of fifty-six. His death was deeply lamented, and his funeral elegy was written by Ovid.<sup>2</sup>

Though Messala had attained the highest point of exaltation, in an age of the most violent political factions, and the most flagrant moral corruption, he left behind him a spotless character; being chiefly known as a disinterested patron of learning, and a steady supporter, so far as was then possible, of the principles of the ancient constitution. “Messala,” says Berwick, “had the singular merit of supporting an unblemished character, in a most despotic court, without making a sacrifice of those principles for which he had fought in the fields of Philippi; and the genuine in-

<sup>1</sup> Pliny, *Hist. Nat. Lib.* VII. c. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Cui nos et lacrymas, supremum in funere munus,  
Et dedimus medio scripta canenda foro.

*Epist. ex Ponto*, I. 7.



tegrity of his character was so deeply impressed on all parties, that it attracted a general admiration in a most corrupt age. He was brave, eloquent, and virtuous: he was liberal, attached to letters, and his patronage was considered as the surest passport to the gates of fame, and extended to every man who was at all conversant with letters. This character is supported by history, is not contradicted by contemporary writers, and is sealed by the impartial judgment of posterity. No writer, either ancient or modern, has ever named Messala without some tribute of praise. Cicero soon perceived that he possessed an assemblage of excellent qualities, which he would have more admired had he lived to see them expanded and matured to perfection. Messala was his disciple, and rivalled his master in eloquence. In the opinion of the judicious Quintilian, his style was neat and elegant, and in all his speeches he displayed a superior nobility. In the Dialogue of Orators, he is said to have excelled Cicero in the sweetness and correctness of his style. His taste for poetry and polite literature will admit of little doubt, when we call to mind that he was protected by Cæsar, favoured by Mæcenas, esteemed by Horace, and loved by Tibullus. Horace, in one of his beautiful odes, praises Messala in the happiest strains of poetry, calls the day he intended to pass with him propitious, and promises to treat him with some of his most excellent wine: ‘For,’ says the poet, ‘though Messala is conversant with all the philosophy of Socrates and the Academy, he will not decline such entertainment as my humble board can

supply.<sup>1</sup> The modest Tibullus flattered himself with the pleasing hopes of Messala's paying him a visit in the country. 'Where,' says he, 'my beloved Delia shall assist in doing the honours for so noble a guest.' The rising genius of Ovid was admired and encouraged by Messala; and this condescension the exiled bard has acknowledged in an epistle to his son Messalinus, dated from the cold shores of the Euxine. In this letter Ovid calls Messala his friend, the light and director of all his literary pursuits. It is natural to suppose an intimacy subsisted between Messala and Virgil, and yet no historical circumstance has come to our knowledge sufficient to evince it. The poem called *Ciris*, which is dedicated to Messala, and has been ascribed to Virgil by some grave authorities, grows more suspicious every day. Tacitus, whose judgment of mankind is indisputable, and whose decision is not always in the most favourable point of view, seems fond of praising Messala; and in a speech given to Silius, the Consul-elect, he considers him among the few great characters who have risen to the highest honours by their integrity and eloquence. Even Tiberius himself, when a youth, took him for his master and pattern in speaking; and happy would it have been for the Roman people had he also taken him for his guide and pattern in virtue."

Messala was united to Terentia, who had been first married to Cicero, and subsequently to Sallust, the

<sup>1</sup> Descende, Corvino jubente

Promere languidiora vina.

Non ille, quanquam Socraticis madet

Sermonibus, te negliget horridus.

*Od. Lib. III. 21.*

historian. After the death of Messala, she entered, in extreme old age, into a fourth marriage, with a Roman senator, who used to say that he possessed the two greatest curiosities in Rome, the widow of Cicero and the chair in which Julius Cæsar had been assassinated. Messala left by Terentia two sons, Marcus and Lucius. The eldest of these, who was Consul in 751, took the name of Messalinus; he highly distinguished himself under Tiberius, when that prince commanded, before his accession to the empire, in the war of Pannonia.<sup>1</sup> Messalinus inherited his father's eloquence, and also followed the example he had set, in devoted attachment to Augustus, and the patronage he extended to literature. But during the reign of Tiberius, he was chiefly noted as one of the most servile flatterers of that tyrant.<sup>2</sup> The younger son of Messala assumed the name of Cotta, from his maternal family, and acted a conspicuous, though by no means a reputable, part in the first years of Tiberius. Both brothers were friends and protectors of Ovid,<sup>3</sup> who addresses to Messalinus two of his epistles from Pontus, which are full of expressions of respect for the memory of his illustrious father.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Velleius Paterc. Lib. II. c. 112.

<sup>2</sup> Tacit. *Annal.* L. III. c. 18, 34.

<sup>3</sup> Adde quod est Frater tanto tibi junctus amore,

Quantus in Atridis Tyndaridisque fuit;

Is me nec comitem nec dedignatus amicum est.

*E Ponto*, Lib. I. ep. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Hortator studii causaque faxque mei.

*Ibid.*

Ille domûs vestræ primis venerator ab annis.

*E Ponto*, Lib. II. ep. 2.



Lucius Volcatius Tullus stood in the same relation to Propertius, of a patron and friend, as Messala to Tibullus and Ovid. He was nephew of that Lucius Volcatius Tullus who was Consul in the year 687, and who is mentioned by Cicero in his orations against Catiline, and his letters to Atticus. At the commencement of the civil wars, the elder Tullus espoused the cause of Julius Cæsar. His nephew, who was then a youth, followed the same party; and having steadfastly adhered to the fortunes of the adopted son, he became Consul along with Augustus in 720, the year preceding the Consulship of Messala and the battle of Actium. After that victory, he was employed in various foreign expeditions, and spent much of his time in Greece and Asia Minor.<sup>1</sup> He possessed, however, a delightful villa in Italy, surrounded with woods, and situated on the banks of the Tiber, betwixt Rome and Ostia, at which he occasionally resided, in great splendour and luxury.<sup>2</sup> If we may believe a flattering poet, he had never yielded, even in youth, to the fascinations of love, but had devoted his whole existence to the service of his country—

<sup>1</sup> Propertii *Eleg.* I. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Tu licet abjectus Tiberinâ molliter undâ

Lesbîa Mentoreo vina bibas opere :

Et modo tam celeres mireris currere lintres,

Et modo tam tardas funibus ire rates :

Et nemus omne satas intendat vertice sylvas,

Urgetur quantis Caucasus arboribus :

Nec tamen ista meo valeant contendere amorî ;

Nescit amor magnis cedere divitiis.

Propertii *Eleg.* Lib. I. El. 14. Ad Tullum.

Nam tua non ætas unquam cessavit amori,  
Semper sed armatæ cura fuit patriæ.<sup>1</sup>

Tullus lived to an advanced age, having survived Mæcenas, whom he had long rivalled as a patron of literature, and, after his death, almost supplied his place. He is now chiefly known as the friend of Propertius, who has addressed to him many of his elegies, expressing devoted attachment, and confiding to him the story of his unfortunate loves.

Such were the men by whom literature was chiefly encouraged and protected in the age of Augustus. They were all of them rich and powerful—consuls, statesmen, and warriors—yet now they are only known to us, or at least are only objects of interest, as the persons from whom Virgil obtained the restoration of a few acres of land, of which he had been unjustly deprived, and to whom Horace fled destitute and trembling from the field of Philippi.

To them, however, must be gratefully attributed the existence, or at least the perfection, of many works of genius, by which all ages have been gladdened and delighted. Under a republic, the shelter which such men might have afforded, would perhaps have been less required; but their patronage would also have been less extensive and liberal; and the protection of Cato or Scipio could not have ripened genius to such maturity as the beams of that favour which shone from the Court of Augustus.

<sup>1</sup> Propertii *Eleg.* Lib. I. 6.

On the accession of a prince, the world of letters experienced a revolution corresponding to that which took place in politics after the death of Brutus. Augustus, on attaining the sovereignty, was anxious to change, not only the spirit of the republic, but also the character of literature and tone of poetry, and to establish in them, as well as in political life, a new monarchical age. Hence, there arose a school of politics, imbued with the principles of the court, and a school of literature, directed by its taste.

It may, perhaps, at first view, appear strange, that the revolution from a republican to a regal form of government, which deadened taste and genius in Greece, should have quickened and purified them in Rome. But when Philip and Alexander established their sovereignty over the whole of Greece, its states, along with freedom, lost their national spirit, and with it their peculiar tone and whole strength of feeling. Thebes and Athens became appendages of the Macedonian empire. The Court of Philip was at Pella, and that of Alexander at Babylon. But Rome, though enslaved by one of her own citizens, still continued to be the capital of the world—"imperii decorumque locus." The yoke, too, was fastened on the Athenians with a strong and open hand; it was imposed as firmly, indeed, by Augustus as by Philip or Alexander, but with more address. Philip was a foreigner, who subjected an enemy by his intrigues and his arms; Augustus was a Roman, who affected to be only the first citizen in the state.

When fortune had placed the empire of the world



in the hands of Augustus; when that prince imposed servitude with the appearance of liberty, shut the Temple of Janus, and bestowed on his subjects the advantages of a government, which relieved them from all political perturbation, they viewed with tranquillity, and even satisfaction, the establishment of a power, the dread of which had, for five centuries, been the source of ceaseless inquietude and alarm to their ancestors. They readily accustomed themselves to a yoke, under which, possessing the image of liberty, they combined the indulgence of their republican prejudices with the blessings of monarchy. The Prince and his able ministers now regulated the whole external and internal policy of the state; and there was no longer a field for political exertion, as in the days of the Commonwealth. The peaceful disposition of Augustus, and the universal sovereignty of Rome, precluded all warfare, except when the incursions of a horde of barbarians were to be repelled in some distant corner of the empire. Neither military affairs nor agriculture afforded their former occupation to the minds of the Romans. The free voice of eloquence was hushed. There were no more grand and exciting preparations for wars, whether foreign or domestic, nor shocks of parties, nor struggles for liberty, nor sacrifices for the public weal. The uniformity of an absolute government left nothing but court intrigues, suspicions, accusations, and trials, with other concomitants of regular and tranquil times. Talent and ambition, when excluded from the field of political activity, naturally sought to reap a humbler harvest of glory in the cultivation of poetry, or the

imaginative arts, in which alone they could now seek for applause with honour and safety. Literature thus became in fact the great sphere for the exertion of talents ; and that intellect, which could no longer shine in the camp, or the forum, was directed to what the Romans considered as subordinate departments—poetry and history.

It was with peculiar fondness and redoubled affection, that the Romans returned in this age to the cultivation of poetry,<sup>1</sup> which had been neglected during the stormy periods of civil dissension. Cornelius Nepos, in his *Life of Atticus*,<sup>2</sup> says, that he might with truth affirm, that Lucius Calidius was the most elegant poet that age had produced, since the time of Lucretius and Catullus. His name, however, is almost utterly unknown ; and little more celebrity is possessed by his contemporary Cinna, to whom other writers have assigned the pre-eminence. But after the formal establishment of the throne of Augustus, a constellation of poets arose, more bright than the Pleiades of Alexandria. Nothing, it was now supposed, could so well celebrate and adorn the restoration of peace, and the happy reign of Cæsar, as the appearance of great national bards, who might supply the chief deficiency in the literature of their country,<sup>3</sup> and create a body of classical

<sup>1</sup> Mutavit mentem populus levis, et calet uno  
Scribendi studio : pueri patresque severi,  
Fronde comas vincti, cœnant, et carmina dictant.

\* \* \*

Scribimus indocti doctique poemata passim.

Horat. *Epist.* II. 1.

<sup>2</sup> C. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Schlegel's *Lectures*, 3d.

works, in which the manners of the Romans should be painted and their warlike exploits commemorated, or in which the ancient Italian traditions should be preserved and handed down to posterity. Hitherto the Roman Muse had described Greek manners, and recorded Greek fables. The plays of Plautus and Terence were mere translations from the comic poets of Athens : Lucretius had embodied, in Latin verse, a system of Grecian philosophy, and Catullus filled his light poems with Greek traditions, concerning Atis, and Thetis, and the locks of Berenice. In the early ages of Roman poetry, such subjects answered all the purposes of entertainment and novelty, as well as the most perfectly original composition. Nothing is ever invented, when imitation will serve the purpose : There is a mine in the breast of man, which must be deeply dug ere its wealth be discovered. But Greek themes had now become trite, and the Greek language was so generally known at Rome, that a tragedy of Euripides, or comedy of Philemon, would no longer have had that novelty in a Latin garb, which they possessed in the age of Scipio, when the readers or audience were unacquainted with the originals. The works, too, of older Latin poets now existed, and afforded materials for imitation. New thoughts were supplied by the formation of a new government, and by the existence of a court, which, though not splendid or ostentatious, displayed a refinement, and bestowed a polish, unknown since the age when the palace of Ptolemy Philadelphus was the asylum of learning. The Roman poets, besides, had been



flattered, courted, and enriched, by the politicians and statesmen of the day, to whom national themes were the most acceptable. Much of the poetical style, indeed, was still imitated from the Greeks; and the sentiments and descriptions were still frequently borrowed, in consequence of the force of early discipline and education, which exhibited nature to the youthful Roman poet reflected in the writings of the Greeks. But the poetical productions of Rome were no longer mere translations, as in former periods; and the subjects now selected were frequently Roman wars and Italian traditions.

Among the poets who thus led the way in the embellishment of Italian subjects, though with a portion of Greek imitation, the first in time, as well as dignity, was

PUBLIUS VIRGILIUS<sup>1</sup> MARO,

who bestowed on the poetry of his native country a character, soft yet dignified, elegant yet sublime.

There exist but few authentic materials from which we can collect any circumstances concerning the life

<sup>1</sup> It has been disputed whether the name of this poet should be written *Vergilius* or *Virgilius*.—"De scripturâ nominis," says Heyne, "digladiati sunt inter se cùm veteres tum recentiores grammatici." The letters *e* and *i* were frequently convertible in the old Latin language; and sanction may be found for either mode of spelling, both in MSS. and inscriptions. At the revival of letters, Politian contended strenuously for *Vergilius*; but even his authority was not sufficient to bring this orthography into general practice.

of this poet. We possess only some scattered remarks of ancient commentators or grammarians, and a *Life* by Donatus, of very dubious authority.<sup>1</sup>

The strong and almost universal desire of obtaining a knowledge concerning the life of an author, from whose writings we have derived gratification or instruction, has induced mankind to credit, on slight testimony, many wonderful incidents, which probably never occurred to the objects of their admiration and interest. Owing to this natural curiosity, our accounts of the lives of several ancient poets have been furnished out with a variety of fictitious and even incredible circumstances; and the biography of Virgil, more than any other, has been so disfigured by fabulous relations, that it is now difficult to select the truth from that mass of falsehood with which credulity has loaded it from time to time.

It appears that Virgil's father was a man of low birth, and that, at one period of his life, he was engaged in the meanest employments. According to some authorities, he was a potter or brick-maker; and, according to others, the hireling of a travelling mer-

<sup>1</sup> It bears the name of Tiberius Claudius Donatus, who lived in the fifth century, some time after Ælius Donatus, so well known as a judicious commentator on Terence. Heyne thinks that the basis of the *Life* was laid by Donatus, but that it was altered and interpolated, when transcribed from time to time by the grammarians and librarians of the convents. It is thus apparently written without any arrangement in the series of events, and many things are recorded which are manifestly fictitious. The monks, indeed, of the middle ages, seem to have conspired to accumulate fables concerning Virgil.

chant, called Magus or Maius. He so ingratiated himself, however, with his master, that he received his daughter Maia in marriage, and was intrusted with the charge of a farm, which his father-in-law had acquired in the vicinity of Mantua.

Our poet was the offspring of these humble parents; and was born in the year of Rome 684, at the village of Andes (now Pietola), which lies at a few miles' distance from Mantua. The cradle of illustrious men, like the origin of celebrated nations, has been frequently surrounded with the marvellous. Hence, the dream of his mother Maia, that she had brought forth a branch of laurel, and the prodigy of the swarm of bees which lighted on the lips of the infant.

The studies of Virgil commenced at Cremona, where he remained till he assumed the Toga Virilis; and to this day the inhabitants of Cremona pretend to show a house, in the street of St Bartholomew, in which Virgil resided when a youth.<sup>1</sup> At the age of sixteen, he removed to Milan, and shortly afterwards to Naples, where he laid the foundation of that multifarious learning, which shines so conspicuously in the *Æneid*, and which he employed with such judgment, as richly to merit the eulogy of Macrobius,—“*Virgilius quem nullius unquam disciplinæ error involvit.*”<sup>2</sup> During his residence in this city, he perused the most celebrated Greek writers, being instructed in their language and literature by Parthe-

<sup>1</sup> *Cremona Literata*, II. 401. ap. Fabricius, *Bib. Lat. Lib. I. c. 12*

<sup>2</sup> *In Somnium Scipionis*, Lib. II. c. 8.



nius Nicenus,<sup>1</sup> well known as the author of a collection of amatory tales, which he wrote for the use of Cornelius Gallus, in order to furnish him with materials for elegies and other poems. Virgil likewise carefully read the Greek historians, particularly Thucydides,<sup>2</sup> and he studied the Epicurean system of philosophy under Syro, a celebrated teacher of that sect. But medicine and mathematics were the sciences to which he was chiefly addicted ; and to this early tincture of geometrical knowledge may, perhaps, in some degree, be ascribed his ideas of luminous order and masterly arrangement, and that regularity of thought, as well as exactness of expression, by which all his writings are distinguished.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, Lib. V. c. 17.

<sup>2</sup> "Fuit autem Virgilius," says Muretus, "gravissimi illius rerum scriptoris studiosissimus ; ut multis certisque argumentis pervinci facile potest."—*Opera*, T. II. p. 312. ed. Ruhnken.

<sup>3</sup> Virgil, it is well known, was regarded as a wizard during the dark ages. His character as an adept in magic probably originated in his knowledge of mathematics ; in the Pharmaceutria of his eighth eclogue ; in his revelation of the secrets of the unknown world, in the sixth book of the *Æneid* ; and in the report, that he had ordered his books to be burnt, which naturally created a suspicion that he had disclosed in them the mysteries of the black art. In whatever way it may have originated, the belief in the magic powers of Virgil appears to have prevailed as soon as mankind lost the refinement of taste which enabled them to appreciate his exquisite productions. The current fictions concerning the magical operations of Virgil were first incorporated, about the beginning of the thirteenth century, in the *Otia Imperialia* of Gervase of Tilbury, Chancellor of the Emperor Otho IV., to whom he presented his extravagant compilation. The fables of Gervase were transcribed by Helinandus, the monk, in his *Universal Chronicle* ; and similar tales

Donatus affirms, that after Virgil had finished his education at Naples, he went to Rome, where his skill in the diseases of all sorts of animals procured him an appointment in the stables of the Emperor. Stories are related concerning his prediction as to the defects of a colt, which, to all the jockeys of the Augustan age, appeared to promise remarkable swiftness and spirit; and concerning a query propounded to him, as if he had been a sorcerer, with regard to the parentage of Augustus—all which are evidently inventions of the middle ages, and bear, indeed, much resemblance to a tale in the *Cento Novelle Antiche*, as also to the stories of the Three Sharpers, and the Sultan of Yemen with his Three Sons, published some years ago, in Mr Scott's additional volume to the Arabian Tales. It does not seem certain, or even probable, that Virgil went at all to Rome from Naples. It rather appears that he returned to his native country, and to

were related in the work of Neckham, *De Naturis Rerum*, and in the *Seven Wise Masters*. Such books supplied materials for the old French romances of Vergilius, and the English *Lyfe of Vergilius*, in which stories are told of miraculous palaces, wonderful lamps, and magical statues, which he constructed.

Vergilius, the sorcerer of the middle ages, is identified and connected with the author of the *Æneid*, from several circumstances being related of the former in the Romances, which actually occurred in the life of the poet, particularly his residence at Naples, and the loss of his inheritance, which he recovered by the favour of the Emperor of Rome. It was also a common opinion, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, as appears from the writings of the poets of that age, that the Mantuan Bard and the Sorcerer were one and the same person.

the charge of his paternal farm : and if, as is generally supposed, he intended to describe his own life and character under the person of Tityrus, in the first eclogue, it is evident that he did not visit Rome till after the battle of Philippi, and consequent division of the lands among the soldiery. Some poems which are still extant, as the *Culex* and *Ciris*, were at one time believed to have been the fruits of his genius at this early period. We are also told, that, in the warmth of his earliest youth, he had formed the bold design of writing, in imitation of Ennius, a poem on the wars of Rome, but that he was deterred from proceeding by the ruggedness of the ancient Italian names, which wounded the delicacy of his ear. It seems certain, at least, that previous to the composition of his *Eclogues*, he had made some imperfect attempts in the higher department of heroic poetry.<sup>1</sup>

The battle of Modena was fought in 711, and the Triumvirate having been shortly afterwards formed, Asinius Pollio was appointed, on the part of Antony, to the command of the district in which the farm of Virgil lay. Pollio, who was a noted extortioner, levied enormous contributions from the inhabitants of the territory intrusted to his care ; and in some instances, when the pecuniary supplies failed, he drove the ancient colonists from their lands, and settled his veterans in their place. He was fond, however, of poetry, and was a generous protector of literary men. The rising genius of Virgil had now begun to mani-

<sup>1</sup> *Eclog.* VI. v. 3.



fest itself. His poetic talents, and amiable manners, recommended him to the favour of Pollio; and so long as that Chief continued in the command of the Mantuan district, he was relieved from all exaction, and protected in the peaceable possession of his property.

Residing constantly in the country, and captivated with the rural beauties of the Idylliums of Theocritus, Virgil early became ambitious to introduce this new species of poetry into his native land; and, accordingly, he seems henceforth to have bent his chief endeavours to imitate and rival the sweet Sicilian. The eclogue entitled *Alexis*, which is usually placed second in the editions of his works, is supposed to have been his first pastoral production, and to have been written in 711, the year in which Pollio came to assume the military command of the territory where our poet resided.<sup>1</sup> It was quickly followed by the *Daphnis* and *Silenus*, as also the *Palæmon*, in which he boasts of

<sup>1</sup> It could be easily proved, that Alexis was the favourite slave of Pollio, and not of Mæcenas, with whom, at this period, Virgil had formed no acquaintance. "Mantuanus poeta," says Apuleius, in his *Apologia*, "puerum amici Pollionis Bucolico ludicro laudans, et abstinens nominum, sese quidem Corydonem, puerum vero Alexin vocat." The authority of Donatus is to the same purpose:—"Inter omnes maximè dilexit Cebetem, et Alexandrum, quem secundâ Bucolicorum eclogâ Alexin appellat, donatum sibi ab Asinio Pollione. Utrumque non ineruditum dimisit—Alexandrum grammaticum, Cebetem vero et poetam." The opinion, that Alexis was bestowed on Virgil by Mæcenas is founded on some lines of Martial, (Lib. VIII. ep. 56.) who, in an epigram of the sort, was not likely to pay much attention to accuracy in point of fact.

the favour of Pollio,<sup>1</sup> and expresses his gratitude for the patronage that leader had extended to him.

But the tranquillity which he enjoyed under the protection of Pollio was of short duration. Previously to the battle of Philippi, the triumvirs had promised to their soldiers the lands belonging to some of the richest towns in the empire. Augustus returned to Italy in the year 712, after his victory at Philippi, and found it necessary, in order to satisfy their claims, to commence a division of lands in Italy on a more extensive scale even than he had intended. In that country there were considerable territories which had been originally and legally the patrimony of the state. But extensive tracts of this species of public property had, from time to time, been appropriated by corporations and individuals, who were now unwilling to be disturbed in their possessions. Julius Cæsar had set the example of reclaiming these farms, and colonizing them with his soldiers. His successor now undertook a similar but more extensive distribution. In the middle and south of Italy, however, the lands were chiefly private inheritance, or had been so long retained by individuals, that a claim had been acquired to them by length of possession ; but in the north of Italy, they were for the most part public property, on which colonists had been more recently settled. These were the lands first assigned to the soldiery ; and the district to the north of the Po was in consequence chiefly affected by the partition. Cremona had un-

<sup>1</sup> Pollio amat nostram, quamvis sit rustica, musam.

fortunately espoused the cause of Brutus, and thus peculiarly incurred the vengeance of the victorious party. But as its territory was not found adequate to contain the veteran soldiers of the triumvirs, amongst whom it had been divided, the deficiency was supplied from the neighbouring district of Mantua, in which the farm of Virgil lay. The discontent which this oppressive measure created in Italy, being augmented by the artifices of Fulvia and Lucius Antony, the wife and brother of the triumvir, gave rise to the war which terminated, favourably for Augustus, with the capture of Perugia. Pollio, being a zealous partisan of Antony, and supporting the party of his brother and Fulvia, who unsuccessfully opposed the division of the lands, had it probably no longer in his power to protect Virgil from the aggressions of the soldiery. He was dispossessed under circumstances of peculiar violence, and which even threatened danger to his personal safety; being compelled, on one occasion, to escape from the fury of the centurion Arrius by swimming the Mincius. He had the good fortune, however, to obtain the favour of Alphenus Varus, with whom he had studied philosophy at Naples, under Syro the Epicurean, and who now either succeeded Pollio in the command of the district, or was appointed by Augustus, to superintend in that quarter the division of the lands. Under his protection Virgil twice repaired to Rome, where he was favourably received not only by Mæcenus but Augustus himself, from whom he procured the restoration of the patrimony of which he had been deprived. This hap-



pened in the commencement of the year 714; and during the course of that season, in gratitude for the favours he had received, he composed his eclogue entitled *Tityrus*, in which he introduces two shepherds, one of whom laments the distraction of the times, and complains of the aggressions of the soldiery, while the other rejoices for the recovery of his farm, and promises ever to honour as a god the youth who had restored it.

The remaining eclogues, with exception, perhaps, of the tenth called *Gallus*, were produced in the course of this and the following year. Virgil had now spent three years in the composition of pastoral poetry, and in constant residence on his farm, except during the two journeys to Rome, which he was compelled to undertake for its preservation.<sup>1</sup> In his pas-

<sup>1</sup> Visconti alleges, (*Icon. Roman.*) that at least some of the eclogues were written on the banks of the Galesus, near Tarentum; and he founds this opinion on two lines of Propertius, in which, addressing Virgil, he says,—

Tu *canis*, umbrosi subter pineta Galesi,  
Thyrsin, et attritis Daphnin arundinibus.

But I scarcely think this implies more, than that Virgil was a pastoral poet, and resided at the time when Propertius wrote, on the banks of the Galesus. Indeed, were these verses to be taken in their literal signification, they would infer, that the *Bucolics* were not completed till Virgil had commenced the composition of the *Æneid*; for the lines of Propertius were written after that period, and *canis* is in the present tense:

Qui nunc *Æneæ* Trojani suscitât arma,  
Jactaque Lavinis mœnia littoribus.  
Cedite, Romani scriptores, cedite, Graii;  
Nescio quid majus nascitur Iliade:  
Tu *canis* umbrosi, &c.

*El. Lib. II. 25.*

torals, however, though written on his native fields, we do not find many delineations of Mantuan scenery, or very frequent allusions to the Mincius and its borders. His great object was to enrich his native language with a species of poetry unknown in Latium, and, to promote his success, he chose Theocritus as his model. With few attempts at invention, he pretended to little more than the merit of being the first Roman who had imitated the Sicilian poet, and hence he did not hesitate to borrow, not merely the sentiments and images, but even the rural descriptions of his master. Yet still the scenery on which he so long gazed attracts our interest, and we would anxiously fix the situation of the spreading beech under which he reclined,—of the plain over which the hills cast, at eve, their protracted shadows,—and the green field on which he allegorically designed to construct his marble fane.

The farm of Virgil lay on the banks of the river Mincius. This stream, which was of a deep sea-green colour, has its source in the Benacus, or Lago di Garda, whence it flows at the foot of little broken hills, which are covered with vineyards, and passing the romantic castle now called Valeggio, situated on an eminence, descends through a long valley, and then expands over the level ground into two small lakes, the one above and the other just below the town of Mantua. It thence pursues a course of about twelve miles, through a flat but fertile country, till it is received into the Po. The poet's farm lay on the right or western bank of

the Mincius, about three miles below Mantua, and close to the village of Andes, or Pietola.<sup>1</sup> It extend-

<sup>1</sup> From the lines of Dante, in his *Purgatorio*,—

E quell' ombra gentil per cui si noma  
Pietola più che villa Mantovana,—(C. 18)

it may be inferred, that it was not only the opinion of Dante, but the common tradition of his age, that Pietola occupied the site of the ancient Andes. Eustace, however, though I think on no sufficient grounds, has placed it at Valeggio, about fifteen miles higher up the river than Mantua. “On no other part,” says he, “of the banks of the Mincius are to be discovered either the bare rocks that disfigured the farm of Tityrus,—or the towering crag that shaded the pruner as he sung,—or the vine-clad grotto where the shepherd reclined,—or the bushy cliff, whence the browsing goats seemed as if suspended,—or the lofty mountains which cast their shadows over the plain.” These circumstances, no doubt, occur in eclogues where Virgil is supposed to paint some features of his own little property; but in an author who professedly borrowed so much, it is difficult precisely to determine what is local or what is general delineation; and more faith is unquestionably due to his descriptions of the Mincius by name, which he represents as now slowly winding, now forming pools among marshy banks, covered with reeds or bulrushes: These are precisely the characteristics of the stream below Mantua at Pietola, but by no means correspond with its appearance near Valeggio, where, according to Eustace himself, “its banks are covered with vines and mulberries, and it rushes from a defile between two eminences, and tumbles in foam over rocky layers.” (*Classical Tour*, vol. I. c. V. p. 213-14, 8vo ed.) But the point seems yet more clearly fixed by some lines at the end of the ninth eclogue. Mœris, who represents Virgil's grievance, and his companion Lycidas, proceeding from Virgil's farm to Mantua, remark, when they approach that part of the Mincius where it expands into a lake, or, as it were, a wide sea of water, that the half of their walk is now over:

Et nunc omne tibi stratum silet æquor; et omnes,  
Adspice, ventosi ceciderunt murmuris auræ:  
Hinc adeo media est nobis via.—



ed over a flat, between some acclivities to the south-west,<sup>1</sup> and the level margin of the stream,<sup>2</sup>—comprehending within its boundaries a vineyard, an orchard, an apiary, and excellent pasture-lands, whence the proprietor supplied Mantua with cheeses, and victims for the altars of the gods.<sup>3</sup> Some old and decaying beeches stood near the borders of the Mincius. The stream itself, where it bounded the farm of Virgil, was wide-spreading, sluggish, and winding.<sup>4</sup> Its marshy banks were covered with reeds, and numerous swans sailed

Now the spot where the stream expands so wide may be accurately enough termed half way between Pietola and Mantua; but one travelling in the opposite direction, from Valeggio, has completed three-fourths of his journey before the Mincius assumes the appearance of a lake, or sea of water.

The tradition, too, which is as old as the time of Dante, has continued from his age till the present time. About half a mile below Pietola, the old Dukes of Mantua built a pleasure-house, which was called Virgiliana. It was demolished during the war in 1701 (*Voyage de Richard*); but the farm and gardens still retain the name; and, till the calamities of war again intervened, the Mantuans had planned a public garden at Pietola, with groves and walks; in the centre of which a temple was to rise, and a statue to be erected, in honour of their immortal poet. (Eustace, *Classical Tour*, vol. I. c. V. 8vo ed.)

<sup>1</sup> Majoresque cadunt altis de montibus umbræ.

*Ec.* 1.

<sup>2</sup> Certe equidem audieram, quâ se subducere colles  
Incipiunt, mollique jugum demittere clivo,  
Usque ad aquam, et veteres, jam fracta cacumina, fagos,  
Omnia carminibus vestrum servâsse Menalcam.

*Ec.* 9.

<sup>3</sup> *Eclog.* l. v. 34.

<sup>4</sup> Propter aquam, tardis ingens ubi flexibus errat  
Mincius, et tenerâ prætexit arundine ripas.

*Georg.* III. v. 14.

upon its waters, or fed on its moist and grassy margin.<sup>1</sup>

On the whole, the landscape of Virgil's farm was tame and insipid, little calculated to excite sublime emotions, or suggest vivid imagery; but he had beheld in his earlier days the scenery of Vesuvius;<sup>2</sup> and even now, if he extended his excursions to some distance from the precincts of his domain, he could visit on one side the floods of the rapid and majestic Po, the *rex fluviorum*, and on the other the Benacus, presenting at times an image of the tempestuous ocean.

The situation of Virgil's residence was low and humid, and the climate chill at certain seasons of the year. His delicate constitution, and the pulmonary complaints with which he was affected, induced him, about the year 714 or 715, when he had reached the age of thirty, to seek a warmer sky. To this change, it may be conjectured, he was farther instigated by his increasing celebrity, and the extension of his poetic fame. His countrymen were captivated by the perfect novelty of pastoral composition, and by the suc-

<sup>1</sup> Et qualem infelix amisit Mantua campum,  
Pascentem niveos herboso flumine cynos.

*Georg.* II. v. 198.

<sup>2</sup> We scarce can think that Virgil's swains  
Dealt much in goats on Mantua's plains;  
Still less could e'er his shepherds dream  
Of pendant rocks on Mincio's stream:  
From Naples his enliven'd thought  
Its fondest, best ideas caught.

W. WHITEHEAD'S *Goat's Beard*.

cessful boldness with which Virgil had transferred the sweet Sicilian strains to a language which, before his attempt, must have appeared, from its hardness and severity, but little adapted to be a vehicle for the softness of rural description, or the delicacy of amorous sentiment, and which had scarcely yet been polished or refined to the susceptibility of such smooth numbers as the pastoral muse demanded. The *Bucolics*, accordingly, were relished and admired by all classes of his contemporaries. So universal was their popularity, that the philosophic eclogue of *Silenus*, soon after its composition, was publicly recited in the theatre by Cytheris, a celebrated *mima*, who was then the mistress of Antony and Cornelius Gallus, and who, in her earlier years, had touched the heart of Brutus.<sup>1</sup>

On quitting his paternal fields, Virgil first proceeded to the capital. Here his private fortune was considerably augmented by the liberality of Mæcenas;<sup>2</sup> and such was the favour he possessed with his patron, that we find him, soon after his arrival at Rome, introducing Horace to the notice of the minister,<sup>3</sup> and attending him, along with that poet, on a political mission to Brundisium. Mæcenas and Ho-

<sup>1</sup> Cytheridam Mimam cum Antonio et Gallo amavit Brutus.—*Aurelius Victor*.

<sup>2</sup> Risit Tuscus Eques, paupertatemque malignam  
Repulit, et celeri jussit abire fugâ.  
Accipe divitias, et vatum maximus esto.

MARTIAL, Lib. VIII. ep. 56.

<sup>3</sup> Horat. *Sat.* Lib. I. 6.



race travelled together from Anxur to Sinuessa, where they were joined by Virgil, who came there accompanied by his two friends Plotius Tucca and Varius. There was much mutual joy at this happy meeting, and the whole party seem to have passed together a most delightful evening. They proceeded early on the following morning to Capua, where Mæcenas spent the forenoon in playing at tennis; but this exercise being too violent for Horace, who at the time was afflicted with tender eyes, and for Virgil, who laboured under an acrid indigestion in the stomach, the two poetical friends enjoyed a *siesta* while their patron was engaged with his game. In the afternoon, they were entertained by Cocceius, one of the politicians of the party, at his hospitable and plentiful villa, which lay upon their road, and then continued their journey. Varius left them with much regret at Canusium; but Virgil appears to have accompanied Mæcenas all the way to Brundisium.<sup>1</sup>

Nor did Virgil enjoy less favour with the emperor himself than with his minister. It is said, that he never asked anything from Augustus which was refused: but, though it be affirmed by Donatus,<sup>2</sup> I no more believe, that Augustus consulted him with regard to his resignation of the government, as a sort of umpire between Agrippa and Mæcenas, than that our poet formed the magical statues of Rome, and brazen fly of Naples.

It was probably during this period of favour with

<sup>1</sup> Horat. *Sat.* Lib. I. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Donat. *Vit. Virgil.*

the emperor and his minister, that Virgil contributed the verses in celebration of the deity who presided over the gardens of Mæcenas; and wrote, though without acknowledging it, that well-known distich in honour of Augustus, of which the merit and rewards were for some time appropriated by another:—

Nocte pluit totâ; redeunt spectacula mane;  
 Divisum imperium cum Jove Cæsar habet.

During his residence at Rome, Virgil inhabited a house on the Esquiline hill, which was furnished with an excellent library, and was pleasantly situated near the gardens of Mæcenas. The supposed site, and even ruins, of his mansion, were long shown to modern travellers, whose fancy has supplied the walks, the laurels, and the fountains:

Suffice it now th' Esquilian mount to reach  
 With weary wing, and seek the sacred rests  
 Of Maro's humble tenement. A low  
 Plain wall remains; a little sun-gilt heap,  
 Grotesque and wild. The gourd and olive brown  
 Weave the light roof; the gourd and olive fan  
 Their amorous foliage, mingling with the vine,  
 Who drops her purple clusters through the green.  
 Here let me lie, with pleasing fancy soothed!—  
 Here flow'd his fountain, here his laurels grew;  
 Here oft the meek good man, the lofty bard,  
 Framed the celestial song, or, social, walk'd  
 With Horace, and the ruler of the world—  
 Happy Augustus!—<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dyer's *Ruins of Rome*.

Yet, however enviable was Virgil's present lot, the bustle and luxury of an immense capital were little suited to his taste, to his early habits, or to the delicacy of his constitution, while the observance and attention he met with were strongly repugnant to the retiring modesty of his disposition. Such was the popularity which he derived from his general character and talents, that on one occasion, when some of his verses were recited in the theatre, the whole audience rose up to salute Virgil, who was present, with the same respect which they would have paid to the emperor.<sup>1</sup> And so great was the annoyance which he felt on being gazed at and followed in the streets of Rome, that he sought shelter, it is said, in the nearest shops or alleys, from public observation.

At the period when Virgil enjoyed so much honour and popularity in the capital, Naples was a favourite retreat of illustrious and literary men,—the “studio florentes ignobilis otî,” who longed to prosecute in repose light and agreeable studies. There Virgil retired about 717, when in the 33d year of his age; and he continued during the remainder of his life, to dwell chiefly in that city, or at a delightful villa which he possessed in the Campania Felix, in the neighbourhood of Nola, ten miles east from Naples,—leading a life which may be considered as happy, when compared with the fate of the other great epic poets, Homer, Tasso, and Milton, in whom the mind or the vision was darkened. About the time when he first

<sup>1</sup> *De Causis Corruptæ Eloquentiæ*, c. 13.



went to reside at Naples,<sup>1</sup> he commenced his *Georgics*, by order of Mæcenas,<sup>2</sup> and continued, for the seven following years, closely occupied with the composition of that inimitable poem. During this long period, he was accustomed to dictate a number of verses in the morning, and to spend the rest of the day in revising and correcting them, or reducing them to a smaller number,—comparing himself, in this respect, to a she-bear, which licks her misshapen offspring into proper form and proportion.<sup>3</sup>

Little is known concerning the other circumstances of Virgil's life, during the years in which he was employed in perfecting his *Georgics*. He had a dispute, it is said, with his neighbours, the inhabitants of Nola, from whom he requested permission to convey a small stream of water into his villa, which was adjacent to their town. The citizens would not grant the favour, and the offended poet expunged the name of Nola from the following lines of his *Georgics* :—

Talem dives arat Capua, et vicina Vesevo  
Nola jugo——

and substituted the word *ora* instead of the obnoxious city.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Illo Virgilium me tempore dulcis alebat  
Parthenope, studiis florentem ignobilis oti.

*Georg. Lib. IV. v. 564.*

<sup>2</sup> Interea Dryadum sylvas saltusque sequamur  
Intactos, tua, Mæcenas, haud mollia jussa.

*Georg. Lib. III. v. 41.*

<sup>3</sup> Au. Gellius, *Noct. Attic. Lib. XVII. c. 10.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid. Lib. VII. c. 20.*

Fifteen hundred years afterwards, the inhabitants of this town would

Some old commentators inform us, that, in the year 723, Virgil wished to accompany Augustus to the battle of Actium.—“*Scilicet,*” says Heyne, somewhat sarcastically, “*quemadmodum Horatius Mæcenati comes esse volebat.*”

The genius of Virgil, being attended with some degree of diffidence, seems to have gained, by slow steps, the measure of confidence which at length emboldened him to attempt epic poetry. He had begun his experiments in verse with humble efforts, in the pastoral line; though, even there, we behold his ardent Muse frequently bursting the barriers, by which she ought naturally to have been restrained. He next undertook the bolder and wider topic of husbandry; and it was not till he had finished this subject with unrivalled success that he presumed to write the *Æneid*. This poem, which occupied him till his death, was commenced in 724, the same year in which he had completed the *Georgics*. After he had been en-

not admit Pontanus within their gates, because he arrived a little after they were shut. This second affront to the fraternity of poets drew down on them the imprecations of Sannazzarius, in the following epigram:—

*Infensum musis nomen, male grata petenti  
Virgilio optatam Nola negavit aquam :  
Noluit hæc eadem Joviano rustica vati  
Hospitium parvæ contribuisse moræ.  
Idcirco nimirum hoc dicta es nomine Nola,  
Nolueris magnis quod placuisse viris.  
At tibi pro scelere hoc, cœnosos fusa per agros,  
Exhaust populos Styx violenta tuos :  
Jamque quid a nullis abolenda infamia sæclis  
Imprecet ? et cœlum desit et unda tibi.*

gaged for some time in its composition, the greatest curiosity and interest concerning it began to be felt at Rome. A work, it was generally believed, was in progress which would eclipse the fame of the *Iliad*; <sup>1</sup> and the passage which describes the shield of Æneas, appears to have been seen by Propertius.<sup>2</sup> Augustus himself at length became desirous to read the poem, so far as it had been carried; and, in the year 729, while absent from Rome on a military expedition against the Cantabrians, he wrote to the author from the extremity of his empire,<sup>3</sup> entreating to be allowed a perusal of it. Macrobius has preserved one of Virgil's answers to Augustus:—"I have of late received from you frequent letters. With regard to my Æneas, if, by Hercules, it were worth your listening to, I should willingly send it. But so vast is the undertaking, that I almost appear to myself to have commenced such a work from some defect in judgment or understanding; especially since, as you know, other and far higher studies are required for such a performance."<sup>4</sup> Prevailed on at length by these importunities, Virgil, about a year after the return of Augustus, recited to him the 6th book, in presence of his sister Octavia, who had recently lost her only son Marcellus, the darling of Rome, and the adopted child of Augustus. The poet, probably

<sup>1</sup> Nescio quid majus nascitur Iliade.

Propert. *El.* Lib. II. 25.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Dignatus tenui Cæsar scripsisse Maroni.

Claudian, *Epist. ad Olybrium.*

<sup>4</sup> *Saturnalia*, Lib. I. c. 24.



in the prospect of this recitation, had inserted the affecting passage, in which he alludes to the premature death of the beloved youth—

O nate, ingentem luctum ne quære tuorum, &c.

But he had skilfully suppressed the name of Marcellus, till he came to the line—

Tu Marcellus eris—manibus date lilia plenis.

It may be well believed, that the widowed mother of Marcellus swooned away, at the pathos of verses which no one, even at this day, can read without tears.

It was much the practice among the Roman poets, to read their productions aloud; and Virgil is said to have recited his verses with wonderful sweetness and propriety of articulation. During the composition of the *Æneid*, he occasionally repeated portions of it to those friends, whose criticisms he thought might improve the passages he rehearsed. Eros, his librarian and freedman, used to relate, when far advanced in life, that in the course of reciting, his master had extemporally filled up two hemistichs: The one was "*Misenum Æolidem*," to which he immediately added, "*quo non præstantior alter*;" and the other the half verse following, "*Ære ciere viros*," to which, as if struck with poetic inspiration, he subjoined, "*Martemque accendere cantu*;" and he immediately ordered his amanuensis to insert these additions in their proper places in the manuscript of his poem.

Having brought the *Æneid* to a conclusion, but not

to the perfection which he wished to bestow on it, Virgil, contrary to the advice and wish of his friends, resolved to travel into Greece, that he might correct and polish this great production at leisure, in that land of poetic imagination. It was on undertaking this voyage, that Horace addressed to him the affectionate ode beginning :—

Sic te diva potens Cypri,  
Sic Fratres Helenæ, lucida sidera,  
Ventorumque regat Pater,  
Obstrictis aliis, præter Japyga,  
Navis, quæ tibi creditum  
Debes Virgilium, finibus Atticis  
Reddas incolumem, precor,  
Et serves animæ dimidium meæ.

Virgil proceeded directly to Athens, where he commenced the revisal of his epic poem, and added the magnificent introduction to the third book of the *Georgics*. He had been thus engaged for some months at Athens, when Augustus arrived in that city, on his return to Italy, from a progress through his eastern dominions. When he embarked for Greece, it had been the intention of Virgil to have spent three years in that country, in the correction of his poem ; after which, he proposed to pass his days in his native country of Mantua, and devote the remainder of life to the study of philosophy, or the composition of some great philosophical poem : The arrival of Augustus, however, induced him to shorten his stay, and to embrace the opportunity of returning to Italy, in the retinue of the Emperor. But the hand of death was

already upon him. From his youth he had been of a delicate constitution; and as age advanced, he was afflicted with frequent headaches, asthma, and spitting of blood. Even the climate of Naples could not preserve him from frequent attacks of these maladies, and their worst symptoms had increased during his residence in Greece. The vessel in which he embarked with the Emperor, touched at Megara, where he was seized with great debility and languor. When he again went on board, his distemper was so increased by the motion and agitation of the vessel, that he expired a few days after he had landed at Brundisium, on the south-eastern coast of Italy. His death happened in the year 734, when he was in the fifty-first year of his age. When he felt its near approach, he ordered his friends, Varius and Plotius Tucca, who were then with him, to burn the *Æneid*, as an imperfect poem.<sup>1</sup> This command of Virgil, has excited the wonder of posterity. But the great Roman writers were indebted for their supreme excellence to their notions of perfection. Cicero, as we have already seen, entertained such lofty ideas of eloquence, that even the periods of Demosthenes did not fill up the measure

<sup>1</sup> The ancient classical authorities only say, that Virgil commanded the *Æneid* to be burned. (Plin. *Hist. Nat. Lib. VII. c. 30. Noct. Attic. XVII. 10. Macrob. Satur. I. 24.*) Donatus says that he had ordered it to be burned, but adds that, on Varius and Tucca representing to him that Augustus would not permit it to be destroyed, he committed it to them for revisal and correction. Moreri relates the story as it is told by Macrobius, Au. Gellius, and Pliny; and Bayle, as usual, reprehends him, because he has not given it according to the version of Donatus.



of his conceptions : and though to us the poem of Virgil may appear almost perfect, his discerning eye, doubtless, perceived a perfection, which was far beyond it.<sup>1</sup>

Augustus, however, interposed to save a work, which he no doubt foresaw would at once confer immortality on the poet, and on the prince who patronised him. It was accordingly intrusted to Varius and Tucca, with a power to revise and retrench, but with a charge that they should make no additions ;<sup>2</sup> a command which they so strictly observed, as not to complete even the hemistichs, which had been left imperfect. They are said, however, to have struck out twenty-two verses from the second book, where Æneas, perceiving Helen amid the smoking ruins of Troy, intends to slay her, till his design is prevented by his goddess mother.<sup>3</sup> These lines accordingly were wanting in many of the ancient MSS. but they have been subsequently restored to their place. There was also a report long current, that Varius had made a change, which still subsists, on the arrangement of two of the books, by transposing the order of the second and

<sup>1</sup> The Germans have written a number of idle tracts on the question, why Virgil ordered his Æneid to be burned ; but the idlest of all is, that of Bartenstein—"Cur Virgilius moriens Æneida comburi jussit ? Coburg, 1774, 4to," where the author maintains that he ordered it to be destroyed in a fit of patriotic repentance, on account of the injury he had done to the cause of freedom, by flattering Augustus, and reconciling the Romans to his dominion.

<sup>2</sup> Hieron. *Chron. Euseb. ab Olymp.* 190.

<sup>3</sup> See, on this subject, Catrou, *Œuvres de Virgile. Dissert. sur le 2d Livre de l'Eneide.* Note 10.

third,<sup>1</sup> the latter having stood first in the original MS. According to some accounts, the four lines, "Ille ego qui quondam," which are still prefixed to the *Æneid* in many editions, were expunged by Varius and Tucca; but according to others, they never were written by Virgil, and are no better than an interpolation of the middle ages.

Virgil bequeathed the greater part of his wealth, which was considerable, to a brother. The remainder was divided among his patron Mæcenas and his friends Varius and Tucca. Before his death he had also commanded that his bones should be carried to Naples, where he had lived so long and so happily. This order was fulfilled under charge of Augustus himself.

According to the most ancient tradition, and the most commonly received opinion, the tomb of Virgil lies about two miles to the north of Naples,<sup>2</sup> on the slope of the hill of Pausilippo, and over the entrance to the grotto, or subterraneous passage, which has been cut through its ridge, on the road leading from Naples to Puteoli. Cluverius<sup>3</sup> and Addison,<sup>4</sup> however, have placed the tomb on the other side of Naples, near the foot of Mount Vesuvius. The geographer has chiefly drawn his arguments from the following verses of Statius:

<sup>1</sup> Nisus Grammaticus audisse se a senioribus dicebat, Varium duorum librorum ordinem commutâsse, et qui tum secundus erat in tertium locum transtulisse.

<sup>2</sup> Euseb. *Chron.* Donat. *Vita.*

<sup>3</sup> *Italia Antiqua.*

<sup>4</sup> *Remarks on several parts of Italy, &c.* See also Forsyth's *Remarks on Italy*, p. 102.

—En egomet somnum, et geniale secutus  
 Littus, ubi Ausonio se condidit hospita portu  
 Parthenope, tenues ignavo pollice chordas  
 Pulso, Maroneique sedens in margine templi  
 Sumo animum, et magni tumulis ad canto magistri.

\* \* \* \* \*

Hæc ego Chalcidicis ad te, Marcelle, sonabam  
 Littoribus, fractas ubi Vesbius egerit iras,  
 Æmula Trinacrius volvens incendia flammis.<sup>1</sup>

According to Cluverius' interpretation of these lines, Statius asserts, that Virgil's tomb stood on the beach, and at the foot of Vesuvius. But the expressions, on which he rests his opinion, seem to allude solely to the general and most striking features of the country, and not to the particular site of the tomb of Virgil. The poet speaks only in general of the Chalcidic shores, places which experienced the rage of Vesuvius; and such vague language seems merely to indicate the neighbourhood of Naples. Gibbon,<sup>2</sup> who had profoundly studied Cluverius, expresses his opinion, that as the common tradition of the country can be reconciled with the verses of Statius, it ought not lightly to be rejected. The belief, which was that of Petrarch, Sannazzarius, and Bembo, may, therefore, still be cherished by the traveller who climbs the hill of Pausilippo, that he has hailed the shade of Virgil, on the spot where his ashes reposed. Notwithstanding the veneration which the Romans entertained for the works of Virgil, his sepulchre was neglected

<sup>1</sup> *Sylv. Lib. IV. 4. ad Marcellum.*

<sup>2</sup> *Miscellaneous Works*, Vol. V. p. 419.—See also Cramer's *Description of Ancient Italy*, Vol. II. p. 174. ed. 1826.



before the time of Martial, who declares, that Silius Italicus first restored its long-forgotten honours.<sup>1</sup> What is at present called the tomb, is in the form of a small, square, flat-roofed building, placed on a sort of platform, near the brow of a precipice, on one side, and on the other sheltered by a superincumbent rock.<sup>2</sup> Half a century ago, when Moore travelled in Italy, an ancient laurel, (a shoot perhaps of the same which Petrarch planted,) overhung the simple edifice.<sup>3</sup> Within the low-vaulted cell, was once placed the urn, which was supposed to contain the ashes of Virgil. Olaus Wormius,<sup>4</sup> who visited the spot, and plucked three leaves of laurel, as also Pietro

<sup>1</sup> *Ep. Lib. XI. ep. 51.* ed. Langii, 1617.—The Epigrams of Martial are differently arranged and numbered in the editions.

<sup>2</sup> Eustace's *Classical Tour*, Vol. II. c. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Moore's *Travels*, Letter 65.

<sup>4</sup> In Museo, Amst. 1555, ap. Fabricius. *Bib. Lat.* T. I. c. 12. § 1. In ancient times, these laurels appear to have been most luxuriant. Drummond of Hawthornden has a madrigal to the bay-tree growing on the ruins of Virgil's tomb. An old English traveller, in the middle of the seventeenth century, says, "Virgil's tomb is covered almost over with laurel, or bay trees, as if that poet's laurel were grown into a shady bower, to make a whole tomb of laurel for the prince of poets." (Lassel's *Voyage of Italy*, 1670. See also Blainville's *Travels*, Vol. III. c. 45.) The contradiction among modern travellers, with regard to this laurel, is very remarkable. "The laurel," observes Eustace, "which it is said sprung up at the base, and covered the roof with its luxuriant branches, now flourishes only in the verses of youthful bards, or in the descriptions of early travellers." Eustace's Tour was commenced in 1802. Galiffe, who visited the spot fourteen years afterwards, informs us, "that the keeper of Virgil's tomb takes great care to cultivate laurels over its roof; and that none of the visitors goes away without plucking

Stefano, an Italian writer in the middle of the sixteenth century, mention that they had seen this urn, with the epitaph inscribed on it, which is said to have been written by the poet himself, a few moments before he expired—

Mantua me genuit ; Calabri rapuere ; tenet nunc  
Parthenope. Cecini pascua, rura, duces.

It was a common practice among the Latin poets to write their own epitaphs ; and if the above distich be the production of Virgil himself, it is eminently expressive of that modesty, which is universally allowed to have been one of the many amiable features of his character, and which is by no means observable in the epitaphs composed for themselves by Ennius and Nævius. We have seen, that at Rome he avoided all public honours, and was disconcerted by marks of general admiration. But though he loved retirement and contemplation, though he was of a thoughtful and even somewhat melancholy temper, and though he felt not that anxiety for paltry distinctions or trivial testimonies of honour, which harassed the morbid mind of Tasso, it seems to be a mistaken idea that he was indifferent to glory, as Donatus and Asconius Pedianus have asserted. He was evidently fond of fame, and desirous to obtain the applause of his contem-

a leaf." (*Italy and its Inhabitants*, Vol. II. p. 86.) The author of *Mementos of a Tour in Italy*, who came five years afterwards, says : " In place of the bay, which once so appropriately shaded the grave of the poet, no other verdure appears save the ivy and the shrubs, which creep through the open window." (Vol. II. p. 122.)

poraries. And while he shunned the vulgar gaze, and shrunk from the pressure of the multitude, he was not, in the hours of retirement, without that proud exultation of spirit,—that consciousness of high intellectual endowments, and strong imaginative powers,—which announced to him, that he was called to immortality, and destined to confer immortality on his country :

Primus ego in patriam mecum, modo vita supersit,  
Aonio rediens deducam vertice Musam ;  
Primus Idumæas referam tibi, Mantua, palmas,  
Et viridi in campo templum de marmore ponam.<sup>1</sup>

From the earliest periods, the mode of life followed by the ancient Italians was agricultural and rustic ; and a love of rural retirement was prevalent among their descendants so long as they were not totally corrupted by foreign manners, and Oriental luxury. But the general habits of the Romans were practical and industrious. They resorted to the country chiefly for the purpose of labour and lucrative toil, and not to pass their time in pastoral indolence or contemplation. The life of a Roman husbandman was rugged and severe : he could not, like the Sicilian shepherd, wear out his days in singing under a rock, holding his mistress in his arms, and viewing at the same time his flocks feeding, and the Sicilian sea.<sup>2</sup> Hence pas-

<sup>1</sup> *Georg.* Lib. III.

<sup>2</sup> Μη μοι γὰν Πελοπος, μη μοι χρυσὶ Ἀταλάντας  
Ἴειν ἔχειν, μηδὲ προσθε θεῖν ἀνεμών.  
Ἄλλ ὑπο τὰ πέτρα τὰδ' ἄσομαι, ἀγκας ἔχων τυ,  
Συννομα μᾶλ' ἑσσοῶν ταν Σικελαν εἰς ἅλα.

*Theocrit.* *Eid.* 8.



toral poetry was not indigenous at Rome, but was transplanted from the valleys and mountains of Sicily or Arcadia, where it was originally invented, and where, like music, it was the fruit of solitude and leisure :

Avia per nemora ac sylvas saltusque reperta,  
Per loca pastorum deserta, atque otia dia.

But, though probably invented amid scenes of rural retirement, pastoral poetry has been chiefly cultivated in ages of refinement, when those who were assembled in courts and cities looked back with pleasure on the rustic occupations and innocent lives of their forefathers. Theocritus, who was born and bred in Sicily, but flourished in the court of Alexandria under the Egyptian Ptolemy, was the chief writer of pastoral poetry previous to the time of Virgil; and his *Idylliums* have been in all ages the great repertory of pastoral sentiments and descriptions. Virgil was the professed imitator of Theocritus; his images are all Greek, and his scenery such as he found painted in the pages of the Sicilian poet, and not what he had himself observed on the banks of the Mincius.<sup>1</sup> Yet

<sup>1</sup> The ancients seem not to have considered it as plagiarism to borrow whole passages from an author who wrote in a different language. La Cerda and Fulvius Ursinus have collected, with much exactness, the lines which Virgil has copied from Theocritus. They are too numerous to be all quoted, but I subjoin three passages as examples of Virgil's style of imitation:—

Παντα ἔαρ, παντα δὲ νομοί, παντα δὲ γαλακτός .  
Ὀυβάτα πληθεσιν, καὶ τὰ νεὰ τρέφεται  
Ἐνδ' ἂ καλὰ παις ἐπινίσσεται· αἱ δ' ἂν ἀφερπῇ,  
Χω ποίμαν ξηρὸς τήνοβι, καὶ βοτάναι.

*Eid. 8.*

with all this imitation and resemblance, the productions of the two poets are widely different. Thus the

*Omnia nunc rident : at si formosus Alexis  
Montibus his abeat, videas et flumina sicca.*

*T. Aret ager, vitio moriens sitit aëris herba :  
Liber pampineas invidit collibus umbras.  
Phyllidis adventu nostræ nemus omne virebit ;  
Jupiter et læto descendet plurimus imbris.*

*Ec. 7.*

Πα ποτ' ἀρ' ἦθ', ὅκα Δαφνίς ἔτακτο ; πα ποκα νυμφαί ;  
'Ἡ κατὰ Πηνειῶν κάλα τεμπέα, ἡ κατὰ Πινδῶ.  
'Ου γὰρ δὴ ποταμοῖο μέγαν ῥοὴν ἔιχετ' Ἀναπα,  
'Οὐδ' Αἰτνας σκοπιαν, οὐδ' Ἀκιδὸς ἱερὸν ὕδωρ.

*Eid. 1.*

*Quæ nemora, aut qui vos saltus habuere, puellæ  
Naiades, indigno quum Gallus amore periret ?  
Nam neque Parnassi vobis juga, nam neque Pindi  
Ullam moram fecere, neque Aonia Aganippe*

*Ec. 10.*

'Ἀλλ' ἀφικεῖν τυ ποτ' ἄμμε, καὶ ἔξεις ἄδεν ἑλαττον.  
Ταν γλαυκὰν δὲ θαλάσσαν ἑὰ ποτὶ χερσὶν ὀρεχθῆν.  
'Ἀδίων ἐν ταντρῇ παρ' ἐμὶν ταν νυκτὰ διαξῆς.  
'Ἐντὶ δαφναὶ τήναι, ἐντὶ ραδινὰι κυπαρισσοί.  
'Ἐντὶ μέλας κισσὸς, ἐντ' ἄμπελος ἅ γλυκυκαρῆος.  
'Ἐντὶ ψυχρὸν ὕδωρ, το μοὶ ἅ πολυδένδρεος Ἀίτνα  
Λευκάς ἐκ χιονος, ποτὸν ἀμβροσιον, προΐητι.  
Τίς κεν τῶνδε θάλασσαν ἔχειν ἢ κυμαθ' ἔλοιτο ;

*Eid. 11.*

*Huc ades, O Galatea ; quis est nam ludus in undis !  
Hic ver purpureum, varios hic flumina circum  
Fundit humus flores ; hic candida populus antro  
Imminet, et lentæ texunt umbracula vites.  
Huc ades : insani feriant sine littora fluctus.*

*Ec. 9.*

delineations of character in Theocritus are more various and lively. His Idyls exhibit a gallery of portraits, which entertains by its variety, or delights by its truth; and in which every rural figure is so distinctly drawn, that it stands out, as it were, from the canvass in a defined and certain form. But that want of discrimination of character which has been so frequently remarked in the *Æneid*, is also observable in the pastorals of Virgil. His Thyrsis, Damon, and Menalcas, resemble each other. No shepherd is distinguished by any peculiar disposition or humour; they all speak from the lips of the poet, and their dialogue is modelled by the standard of his own elegant mind. A difference is likewise observable in the scenes and descriptions. Those of Theocritus possess that minuteness and accuracy so conducive to poetic truth and reality; Virgil's representations are more general, and bring only vague images before the fancy.

In the Idylliums of Theocritus, we find a rural romantic wildness of thought, and the most pleasing descriptions of simple unadorned nature, heightened by the charm of the Doric dialect. But Virgil, in borrowing his images and sentiments, has seldom drawn an idea from his Sicilian Master, without beautifying it by the lustre of his language. It has been well observed by Warton, that if the Romans ever excelled their Grecian Archetypes, it was in dressing up and adorning those thoughts and ideas, which they found already prepared for



them. The mind is perhaps incapable of vigorous attention to more than one object at the same moment. While dilated with the conception and creation of new and splendid images, it has not leisure at the time, nor afterwards has it inclination, to embellish them with that pomp of studied expression—with those patient and finishing touches of art, which the author who coolly copies can bestow.

The chief merit, however, of Virgil's imitations, lies in his judicious selections. Theocritus' sketches of manners are often coarse and unpleasing; and his most beautiful descriptions are almost always too crowded. But Virgil refined whatever was gross, and threw aside all that was overloaded or superfluous. He made his shepherds more cultivated than those even of his own time. He represented them with some of the features which are supposed to have belonged to swains, in the early ages of the world, when they were possessed of great flocks and herds; and had acquired a knowledge of astronomy, cosmogony, and music—when the pastoral life, in short, appeared in perfection, and nature had lavished all her stores to render the shepherd happy:—

E benchè qui ciascuno  
Abito e nome pastorale avesse,  
Non fu però ciascuno  
Nè di pensier, nè di costumi rozzo :  
Però ch'altri fu vago  
Di spiar tra le stelle, e gli elementi,  
Di natura e del ciel gli alti segreti.  
Chi d'altra cosa ebbe vaghezza, come  
Ciascun suo piacer segue :

La maggior parte amica  
Fu delle sacre Muse.—<sup>1</sup>

It would scarcely at first sight appear, that a period of civil war, which desolated the provinces of Italy, and spread its horrors over the whole Roman empire, should have tended to encourage the pastoral Muse, whose gentle spirit it was more likely to have totally destroyed. Yet to circumstances thus seemingly unfavourable, we owe some of the most pleasing and interesting eclogues of Virgil, who has made the unfortunate history of his country subservient to the efforts of his genius. Where the mere outlines of nature were to be represented, he has transcribed his similes and descriptions from his Grecian master: But in those pieces to which the distresses of the times, or other political considerations gave rise, he seems more elaborately to have exercised the faculty of invention, or to have applied the lines of Theocritus, as it were by a sort of parody, to the passing events of his own age, or his own private history, dressing out in pastoral colours the leading characters, and transactions of the day.

The eclogues of Virgil may be thus divided into two classes—1st, those in which, by a sort of allegory, some events or characters of the time, are shaded out under an image of pastoral life; and 2d, Those in which shepherds and rural scenes are simply and literally presented to us. To the first class belong the first, fourth, fifth, and ninth eclogues.

In the first eclogue, though many passages be

<sup>1</sup> *Pastor Fido*, Prolog.

translated from Theocritus, the subject has been rendered new and interesting, by painting the influence and effects of war on the tranquillity of rural life. The Latin poet has represented the general calamities of the unhappy period in which he wrote, the expulsion of the Mantuan colonists, and the restoration of his own farm through the favour of the Emperor. We have already seen, that Augustus distributed the lands of Mantua and Cremona among the veteran soldiers who had conquered with him at Philippi; Virgil's property was seized along with that of his compatriots; but having recovered it, he wrote this eclogue in testimony of his gratitude to Augustus. That Virgil intended to figure himself under the person of Tityrus, is an opinion as old as the time of Quintilian, and receives confirmation from the circumstance, that in this eclogue, Tityrus is represented as enamoured of Amaryllis,<sup>1</sup> who, in the second eclogue, is mentioned as having been the mistress of Corydon:<sup>2</sup> Now this is generally allowed to be a pastoral name, assumed in that eclogue by our poet. It has been objected to this interpretation, that Melibœus, the other shepherd in the first eclogue, addresses Tityrus as an old man;<sup>3</sup> while Virgil had scarcely reached the age of thirty at the time of its composition. Hence, it may be inferred, that the allegory was not meant to be in all respects preserved, or perhaps, that Virgil only intend-

<sup>1</sup> Formosam resonare doces Amaryllida sylvas.

<sup>2</sup> Nonne fuit satius tristes Amaryllidis iras,  
Atque superba pati fastidia.—

<sup>3</sup> Fortunate senex ! hîc inter flumina nota, &c.



ed, under the persons of Tityrus and Melibœus, to express, on the one hand, the joy and gratitude of those Mantuan shepherds who had recovered their lands, and on the other, the bitter feelings and complaints of an expatriated colonist, who saw his old companion reclining at ease in the shade, while himself was leading his little flock he knew not whither. The principal charm of the eclogue consists in the contrast of these emotions—the mournful plaints of the exiled shepherd, who was forced to quit his native fields, and the warm heartfelt pathetic bursts of gratitude from the swain, who was still permitted to recline under the boughs of his trees, and to teach the groves to resound with the sweet name of Amaryllis. The eclogue also contains some pleasing little landscapes—Now a shepherd, with his flock around him, resting securely under a spreading beech—now the sun setting, the hills extending their lengthened shadows, and the curling smoke ascending from the cottages. In the following beautiful lines, Virgil, with the true spirit of a pastoral writer, has brought together as delightful an assemblage of images of rural pleasure, as the fancy of a poet could well supply :—

Fortunate senex ! hîc inter flumina nota,  
Et fontes sacros, frigus captabis opacum.  
Hinc tibi, quæ semper vicino ab limite sepes  
Hyblæis apibus florem depasta salicti,  
Sæpe levi somnum suadebit inire susurro.  
Hinc altâ sub rupe canet frondator ad auras.  
Nec tamen interea raucæ, tua cura, palumbes,  
Nec gemere aëriâ cessabit turtur ab ulmo.

4th. This eclogue, which is the noblest of them all and exhibits the highest species of allegorical pastoral, is usually entitled "Pollio," in consequence of being addressed to Asinius Pollio, the early patron of the poet. It was written in the year of his consulship, which happened in 714, and announces, as is well known, in a style of mysterious and prophetic fervour, the birth of a child, under whose future rule the golden age was destined to be restored in Italy.

In every nation, especially when oppressed with severe calamity, prophecies have been promulgated, promising a new and happier order of things. But at no period, and in no nation, were predictions so frequent as during the close of the Roman Republic, and the reigns of the first Emperors: "Augustus," says Suetonius,<sup>1</sup> "librorum fatidicorum Græci Latini-que generis, qui nullis vel parum idoneis auctoribus vulgo ferebantur, supra duo millia contracta undique cremavit."

Of all the prophecies uttered in the Roman empire, those of the Cumæan Sibyl were the most celebrated; and it seems probable that some prediction of that famous oracle served as the basis of the fourth eclogue of Virgil. From the resemblance of its thoughts and images to those contained in the books of sacred poetry, it has been also conjectured that it partly owed its origin to a Greek version of those passages of scripture, in which the advent of the Messiah is announced.<sup>2</sup> But in fact, all the descriptions of a

<sup>1</sup> *In August. c. 31.*

<sup>2</sup> Lowth, *De Sacra Poësi Hebræorum Prælect.*

perfectly happy age, whether past or to come, have been nearly the same in Palestine, Greece, and Italy. Harmless wild beasts, innocuous serpents, fruits of the earth without culture, and gods holding communion with men, have been selected in every land as the ingredients of consummate felicity. At the period of the composition of this eclogue, a treaty had just been concluded at Brundisium, between Cæsar and Antony; and a peace made at such a time, and after such an uninterrupted series of crimes and misfortunes, was sufficient in itself to inspire the mind of a young poet with brilliant prospects, and the splendid imagery belonging to the golden age. The idea, however, that this anticipation of perfect happiness was to be realized under the auspicious rule of some heaven-born infant, was probably derived from the East by the Cumæan Sibyl, or rather those who uttered pretended prophecies in her name, and was dexterously applied by Virgil to the future condition of the Roman empire, and the blessings it would enjoy under the sway of a child of the imperial family, who at that time had just been born, or was immediately expected to see the light. It has, however, been a subject of much controversy, what auspicious babe was alluded to in this *Genethliacon*. Servius, in his commentary on Virgil, affirms, that the eclogue was written in honour of the birth of a son of Pollio, called Saloninus, who died in infancy; from which ancient authority, the opinion that the eclogue applied to a child of Pollio, became the most prevalent among commentators, though some of them, particularly



Ruæus the editor of the Delphin Virgil, have referred it not to Saloninus, but to Asinius Gallus, a son of Pollio, who lived to maturity.—Notwithstanding the authority of Servius, this theory is attended with insuperable difficulties. The poet speaks of the infant as the future ruler of the world—

Pacatumque reget patriis virtutibus orbem ;

and the whole composition is in terms too lofty to be applicable to a son of Pollio. For who at that time could deserve to be called a child of the gods, and the illustrious offspring of Jupiter, except one from the lineage of the Cæsars? At all events, such magnificent promises would not have been held out to a descendant of Pollio, who belonged to the party of Antony, and was on cold terms with Augustus. Besides, is it to be supposed, that if a child of Pollio had been in the view of the poet, he would merely congratulate his patron on the accidental circumstance that the birth had happened during his consulship, and not have dedicated to him one line of compliment as the father? Others have erred still farther, in applying this pastoral to Drusus, the son of Livia,<sup>1</sup> who was not born till 716, two years subsequent to the composition of this eclogue, which was written, as we have seen, in 714, during the consulship of Pollio. About this period, however, two important births took place in the Cæsarian family; Scribonia, the wife of Augustus, whom he afterwards divorced to make way for Livia,

<sup>1</sup> Malfilatre, *Genie de Virgile*, T. I.

was, in the close of 714, shortly expected to give birth to a child, who subsequently became the notorious Julia. The eclogue, however, speaks of a boy; and those who adopt the opinion<sup>1</sup> that it applies to Julia, necessarily suppose that it was written in expectation of the birth, and not after the parturition. The expressions of the poet are somewhat equivocal, and may admit of either interpretation. His lines, “Casta fave Lucina,” &c. and “Matri longa decem tulerunt fastidia menses,” seem to have been written in the prospect of a birth; but, on that supposition, it appears singular that he should have hazarded such decided expressions with regard to the sex of the infant. The only other choice that remains is the birth of Marcellus, the son of Octavia, and nephew of Augustus, who was also born in 714. This application of the subject of the eclogue, which was first hinted at by Ascensius, in his commentary on Virgil,<sup>2</sup> is strongly insisted on by Catrou, and seems, on the whole, to be adopted by Heyne as the least objectionable theory. “In the year 714,” says the former of these critics, “when Asinius Pollio and Domitius Calvinus were consuls, the people of Rome compelled the triumvirs, Octavius and Antony, to conclude a durable peace. It was hoped that an end would be thereby put to the war

<sup>1</sup> Boulacre, *Bibliothèque Française*, T. XXVIII. and *Hist. de l'Acad. des Inscriptions*, T. XXXI. p. 189.—Henley, *Observations on the subject of the Fourth Eclogue, &c. and on the Primary Design of the Æneid*. London, 1788.

<sup>2</sup> Videtur autem non absurdum, si de Marcello Octaviæ Augusti sororis filio, quem Augustus sibi adoptavit, intelligatur.

with Sextus Pompey, who had made himself master of Sicily, and by the interruption of commerce had occasioned a famine at Rome. To render this peace more firm, Antony, whose wife Fulvia was then dead, married Cæsar's sister Octavia, who had lately lost her husband Marcellus, and was then pregnant with a child, who, after his birth, retained the name of his father Marcellus, and, as long as he lived, was the delight of his uncle Octavius, and the hope of the Roman people. It is he that is the subject of the eclogue. Virgil addresses it to Pollio, who was at that time consul, and thereby pays a compliment at the same time to Cæsar, Antony, Octavia, and Pollio." This theory is perhaps more plausible than any of the others; but it is by no means free from objections. For how should it have been supposed, that Marcellus was to govern the universe, when Scribonia was pregnant, and when there was every prospect that Augustus would be succeeded in the empire by his own immediate issue? "The different claims," says Gibbon, "of an elder and younger son of Pollio, of Julia, of Drusus, of Marcellus, are found to be incompatible with chronology, history, and the good sense of Virgil."<sup>1</sup> A late writer, who was sensible of the difficulties of all the schemes of interpretation which had been devised for expounding this eclogue, has assumed, that it was not intended as a prediction, announced by Virgil himself in his own person, but as the recital of a prophecy supposed to have been anciently delivered by the Cumæan Sibyl, and applied

<sup>1</sup> *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, c. 20.



by the poet to Augustus Cæsar. The author attempts to show, by a review of the transactions of the time, compared with the matter of the eclogue, that the prediction could only have Augustus for its object. For to whom else, it is asked, could the poet have thought of ascribing, at such a period, those splendid honours, and all those circumstances of glory, marked out in this exulting eclogue?<sup>1</sup>

This fourth eclogue is written in so elevated a tone of poetry, that some critics have rejected it from the number of Bucolic compositions. But all its images are drawn from the country, or the superstitions of the age common to every part of the empire. In the melioration of the world which the poet foresees, everything refers to the condition of shepherds. He presents us with a rural scene, and a golden age, when the steer shall be unyoked, and the plough and pruning-hook laid aside, when honey shall drop from the sweating oak, and milk bedew the fields. It is this constant reference to rustic life, this restriction to rural imagery, and not the dignity or lowliness of sentiment and expression, which form the true criterion of pastoral composition.

5th. The allegorical object of this eclogue has also been a subject of difficulty and discussion. Two swains are introduced, paying honour, by their verses, to the memory of the shepherd Daphnis. The one represents the cattle as abstaining from their food for grief, the wild beasts of Africa lamenting, the fields withering, Apollo and Pales leaving the plains, and the

<sup>1</sup> *Illustrations of Virgil's Fourth Eclogue.*

nymphs mourning round his corse. In the latter part of the pastoral the scene is changed to joy and triumph: The second shepherd, who takes up the song, represents Daphnis as now received into Olympus; pleasure and transport overflow the plains; the very mountains break forth into songs; altars are erected, and solemn sacrifices are performed to him, as to Ceres and Bacchus. The whole pastoral thus consists of an elegy and apotheosis,—the first shepherd lamenting his decease, and the other proclaiming his divinity. But it is not agreed what person was meant to be figured under the name and character of Daphnis. Some have supposed that he was a fabulous Sicilian shepherd, the son of Mercury, who was believed to have been the inventor of pastoral poetry. Others have believed, that Daphnis denoted Quintilius of Cremona, the intimate friend of Horace and Virgil; while Julius Scaliger thinks, that the lamented shepherd represented Flaccus Maro, the brother of the poet.<sup>1</sup> The high and magnificent terms, however, in which Virgil sings of Daphnis, in that part of the eclogue which celebrates his deification, precludes the idea, that any private individual could be figured under the person of a shepherd, of whom he speaks as a god, treading underfoot the clouds and the stars. The greatness of the poet's conceptions, and the elevated tone he assumes, have led the greater number of commentators, and among others Joseph Scaliger, to believe, that he designed to bewail the death and celebrate the

<sup>1</sup> *Poetic. Lib. I. 4.*

apotheosis, of Julius Cæsar. These critics have explained the description of the mother of Daphnis embracing the dead body of her son, as alluding to the tumults in the Forum, and lamentations over the dead body of Cæsar; and the animals mourning and abstaining from food, as referring to those prodigies which were said to have occurred before his death. In the year of Rome 712, the triumvirs, Antony, Octavius, and Lepidus, erected and consecrated a temple to Julius Cæsar in the Forum,—carried about his statue in solemn procession, along with an image of Venus, in the Circensian games,—decreed supplications to him on receiving the news of a victory,—and ordered that he should be worshipped as a god. It was in allusion to this deification, as is now generally supposed, that Virgil composed his fifth eclogue. This opinion, however, though very commonly adopted, is not without difficulties. Thus, Virgil calls Daphnis *puer*, a term by no means applicable to Julius Cæsar, who was considerably above fifty at the time of his death; he also talks of his beauty, and of his mild, pacific disposition, all which, it must be admitted, seems more applicable to a youthful swain than an old warrior. Menalcas, too, by whom the poet evidently means to represent himself, says, “*amavit nos quoque Daphnis;*” but there is not the least reason to suppose that Virgil had been in any way favoured or protected by Julius Cæsar. It is therefore probable, that he may have had no farther intention in this eclogue, than to imitate the first idyl of Theocritus, in which two shep-



herds lament the fate of *Daphnis*, a Sicilian swain who had pined away for love.

However this may be, the eclogue itself is one of the most elegant and pleasing of the number. The scenery of the spot where the shepherds sing is beautifully described, and is well adapted to the subject of their strain. There is also much delicacy and sweetness in the mutual praises bestowed by the swains on each other's verses. But in no sort of writing does Virgil so much excel as in warm bursts of affection, admiration, and gratitude. Of these there are some beautiful examples in the first eclogue, and another occurs in the fifth :

Dum juga montis aper, fluvios dum piscis amabit,  
 Dumque thymo pascentur apes, dum rore cicadæ ;  
 Semper honos, nomenque tuum, laudesque manebunt.

This eclogue has stood to all succeeding ages as the model of pastoral elegies. In imitation of Virgil's *Daphnis*, tributes of sorrow to the memory of the dead, under this fictitious form, became common in modern times, particularly in England during the reign of Queen Elizabeth and James I. In that age appeared, Spenser's "Lament for Dido, the daughter of a neighbouring shepherd," in the November of his *Calendar*. About the same period, Drayton lamented Elphin, in his sixth eclogue ; Drummond of Hawthornden deplored the death of Alcon, (Sir W. Alexander,) and Browne bewailed Philarete, (Mr Manwod,) in the sixth eclogue of his *Shepherd's Pipe*. Milton's *Lycidas*, however, and his

Latin *Epitaphium Damonis*, to the memory of Carlo Diodati, are the most celebrated modern productions in this line of poetry. Subsequently appeared, Pomfret's *Elegy on Queen Mary*; Congreve's *Pastoral Elegies*; Philips' third pastoral, called *Albino*, written on the death of the Duke of Gloucester, son of Queen Anne, which is, perhaps, the closest imitation of Virgil; and Walsh's fifth eclogue, entitled, *Delia* "lamenting the death of *Mrs Tempest*, who died upon the day of the great storm." Almost all these productions resemble the *Daphnis*, in being divided into two parts; the first lamenting the death of the supposed shepherd, and the second exulting on account of his translation to the heavens.

9th.—This eclogue gives more insight than any of the others into the circumstances of the early life of the poet. Virgil, after having been for a short while reinstated in his patrimony, was again dispossessed by the violence of the centurion Arrius, and had himself nearly fallen a victim to the fury of that soldier. He, in the meanwhile, yielded to the force of circumstances and took his departure for Rome, enjoining the person who had charge of his farm to offer no resistance, and to comply with all the orders of Arrius, as if he had been his legitimate master. The scene of the eclogue is laid during this period. Mœris, who represents the *villicus* or grieve, but, according to Catrou, the father of Virgil, is introduced carrying his kids from the farm to Mantua, for behoof, it may be supposed, of the intrusive centurion. Lycidas, a neighbouring shepherd, who is fond of poe-

try, meets him on the way. Mœris complains of the distresses of the times, and recounts his own misfortunes, and those of his master Menalcas, by whom our poet represents himself.<sup>1</sup> This turns the subject to the poems of Menalcas, and each rehearses, from memory, some fragments of his verses. These are altogether unconnected, and are almost literally translated from Theocritus; but they are among the happiest of Virgil's imitations, and assemble together some of the loveliest objects of wild, unadorned nature :

Huc ades, O Galatea; quis est nam ludus in undis ?

Hic ver purpureum, varios hic flumina circum

Fundit humus flores; hic candida populus antro

Imminet, et lentæ texunt umbracula vites.

Huc ades; insani feriant sine litora fluctus.

The above are what may be called the Allegorical Eclogues of Virgil.

We now come to those imitations of Theocritus in which rural scenes are represented, without allusion to real incidents, or to any feelings which the poet actually experienced, except, perhaps, those of amatory attachment.

2d.—In this eclogue we have little more than the disconsolate expression of a hopeless and guilty passion. The language of the desponding Corydon is wholly pastoral, and a rustic colouring is given to all the fears, solicitations, and reproaches. These have been chiefly copied from the *Cyclops* of Theocritus,

<sup>1</sup> Quint. *Inst. Orat.* Lib. VIII. c. 6.



which Ovid has also imitated in the story of Polyphemus and Galatea, in the thirteenth book of the *Metamorphoses*;—and the different manner in which they have imitated the same Greek original, strongly marks the different genius of the Latin poets.

3d.—This eclogue exhibits a contest between two shepherds in what has been called *Amœbæan* verse; in which the persons introduced recite or sing alternate strains, the one striving to excel the other. There appears, in fact, to have been a custom among the shepherds of old, of vying together in extemporaneous and alternate lines. In Greece and Italy,<sup>1</sup> where the imagination was warm and lively, and the language musical and flexible, this kind of pastoral combat was not unfrequent. All such countries abounded with *improvisatori*: “In Sicily,” says Villoison, in his remarks on the Greek romance of Longus,—“in Sicily, that cradle of pastoral poetry, we may still perceive some sparks of the flame which warmed the breast of Theocritus. In their rustic economy, one everywhere meets the Greek poet, and his descriptions; the shepherds, at this day, dispute the prize of song, and pledge a crook or scrip as the reward of the conqueror.” Italy, too, still abounds with *improvisatori*, who, like the Arcadian shepherds in Virgil, are ever *respondere parati*.

<sup>1</sup> Dicunt in tenero gramine pinguium  
Custodes ovium carmina fistulâ;  
Delectantque Deum, cui pecus et nigri  
Colles Arcadiæ placent.

Horat. *Od.* Lib. IV. 12.

In the eclogue which we have now reached, Menalcas and Damoetas, after indulging in some rustic raillery, resolve to contend for the prize of two bowls, or cups, which they mutually stake ; appointing, at the same time, a neighbouring shepherd to be the judge of their performances. They boast of their respective mistresses,—sing the praises of Pollio,—and propound some absurd enigmas. The poet seems to have laid it down as an indispensable rule in these Amœbæan verses, that the rival swains should answer each other in exactly the same number of lines. Through the whole eclogue the Roman poet has closely imitated his Greek predecessor ; and it is the only one of his pastoral productions in which he has exhibited the coarseness of his original. The shepherds upbraid each other with their mutual thefts and vices ; Menalcas reproaches Damoetas with having stolen a goat, and Damoetas brings yet grosser charges against Menalcas. This may be truth and nature ; but it is not the proper selection which the pastoral poet ought to make from them. The artist should compound rather than copy the objects of nature ; he should separate the mean from the agreeable, and the beautiful from the deformed. “ Truth,” says Fontenelle, “ is necessary to please the imagination ; but it is not necessary to show all the truth. If the half of a thing be painted in a lively and energetic manner, the other part may be concealed, and concealed without observation. The illusion and charm of the pastoral life consist in showing the picture of its tranquillity, while everything base and degrading is withdrawn.”

In consequence of offending against these golden rules, the third eclogue of Virgil is, perhaps, the least pleasing of all his pastoral productions. Yet even here we meet with some delicate touches of nature, and at least two delightful verses of descriptive poetry :

Et nunc omnis ager, nunc omnis parturit arbos ;  
Nunc frondent sylvæ, nunc formosissimus annus.

6th.—This eclogue is addressed by Virgil to Varus, who had studied along with him at Naples, under Syro, the Epicurean philosopher. Two shepherds are introduced, who seize Silenus, while asleep in a cave, and compel him to entertain them with a song, which he had frequently promised to them ; by which contrivance the poet avoids the censure of placing in the mouths of his shepherds doctrines and speculations above their capacities. The god immediately begins to give an account of the formation of the world, according to the system of Epicurus. He then passes on to Deucalion's deluge, and the reign of Saturn, and recounts some of the most celebrated fables and transformations of the primeval world :—

Omnia quæ, Phœbo quondam meditante, beatus  
Audiit Eurotas, jussitque ediscere lauros.

That part of the eclogue which describes the creation of the world is taken from the *Argonautics* of Apollonius Rhodius ; but Virgil hath so vivified the dull verses of the Greek poet, that there is as much difference between the two passages, as between animated nature and the inert mass from which it is supposed to have been formed.



This sixth pastoral has been the subject of severe criticism by Fontenelle; who says that the origin of the world is so absurd, and the fables by which it is succeeded so incoherent and misplaced, that it looks as if the debauch of Silenus the day before had not left his head. The *Silenus* has been parodied, or rather burlesqued, in the last pastoral, or “Saturday,” of Gay’s *Shepherd’s Week*.

7th—Is a poetical contest, in Amœbæan verse, between two shepherds, imitated from the fifth and eighth idyls of Theocritus. Both swains boast of poetical talents; but the eclogue receives an agreeable variety from the different turn of their genius and tempers. Corydon has an amenity of disposition which leads him to see everything in an agreeable and favourable aspect; while Thyrsis appears to be malignant and envious, and generally presents us with unpleasant images. Catrou thinks, that in this and the other Amœbæan eclogues Virgil means to represent, under the characters of the contending shepherds, the two young slaves, Alexander, (who was his Alexis,) and Cebes, both of whom he had instructed in grammar and poetry; but there seems to be no sufficient foundation for this opinion. In general, there is much uncertainty, and wide difference among the commentators, with regard to the persons whom Virgil intends to figure under his pastoral characters.

8th.—This eclogue, which is entitled the *Pharmacutria*, consists of two parts, which do not appear to have any connexion with each other, except that

they seem to have been sung by two shepherds, who were striving together for superiority in verse. The first part imitated from the third idyl of Theocritus, comprehends the complaints and lamentations of the shepherd Damon for the loss of his mistress Nisa, who had preferred his rival Mopsus. In the remaining portion, which is borrowed from the second idyl of the Greek poet, the other shepherd, who is called Alpheisibœus, recites the magic charms of a sorceress, who attempts, by her incantations, to regain the lost affections of Daphnis, and allure him to her arms. This concluding part, which gives name to the whole eclogue, is valuable, not only for its poetical beauties, but for the information which it has preserved to us concerning several superstitious rites, and the heathen notions of enchantment. We also find in it much of this description which has been adopted in modern sorcery, particularly the *loup-garou*, and the waxen image, which, as it melts away, consumes the person whom it is intended to represent.

10th.—Cornelius Gallus, the celebrated elegiac writer, was enamoured of a mistress, called Lycoris, who, under the name of Cytheris, had been formerly beloved by Marc Antony and Brutus. It was for her that Gallus had composed his elegies; but she had now forsaken him, to follow a more favoured lover, who was at this time employed on a military expedition beyond the Alps. Gallus, who was then in early youth, felt deeply affected by her loss. Virgil, accordingly, introduces him in this eclogue, as a shepherd, who, reclining under a solitary rock in Arcadia, be-

wails the inconstancy of his mistress. The poet describes the swains of Arcadia, the rural deities, and even Apollo himself, as coming to Gallus, and attempting though vainly to console him in his affliction. In his address to the shepherds, he wishes that his lot had been humble like theirs; and then, in his pathetic expostulations with his mistress, he presents a striking picture of the sufferings to which his unhappy passion had exposed him. The various resolutions of a desponding lover are successively described, and are such as disappointed passion naturally produces—wild, tender, and inconstant. He first thinks to renew his poetical studies; then suddenly determines to quit the world, and seek out some melancholy retirement, where he may conceal himself among the dens of wild animals, and console himself with carving the name of Lycoris on the trees. He next breaks into a resolution of employing himself in the pleasures of the chase; but at length recollects, with a sigh, that none of these amusements will cure his passion. The plan of the eclogue is a little fantastical, but it is written with much sweetness, and we find in it some of the most musical and touching verses that have flowed from Virgil:

Hic gelidi fontes, hic mollia prata, Lycori;  
Hic nemus, hic ipso tecum consumerer ævo.

Thus happily imitated by Lord Lyttleton, in his fourth eclogue:—

Here limpid fountains roll through flowery meads,  
Here rising forests lift their verdant heads,



Here let me wear my careless life away,  
And in thy arms insensibly decay.

On the whole, the eclogues of Virgil are equally beautiful in description and sentiment. Each rural landscape is painted with a pencil as soft as brilliant; and when his scenery was exhausted, he had recourse to sentiment. Sometimes he has united, in the same verses, the most tender amatory feelings, with the most exquisite pictures of nature :—

Aret ager, vitio moriens sitit aëris herba ;  
Liber pampineas invidit collibus umbras :  
Phyllidis adventu nostræ nemus omne virebit.

This beautiful sentiment has been rendered ridiculous, from being carried too far, by Sannazzarius, in his Piscatory eclogues :—

Nulla mihi sine te rident loca ; displicet æquor,  
Sordet terra, leves odi cum retibus hamos :  
At si aderis tu, Nisa, placebunt omnia ; lætus !  
Tunc ego vel Libycis degam piscator arenis.

*Mopsus.*

The thought has been more happily expanded into a long eclogue, by Cunningham in his *Palemon*.

The excellence of Virgil's eclogues appears to have been regarded by his countrymen, as precluding all attempts of a similar description, for no swains were taught, by any subsequent poet, to touch the rustic pipe, till Capurnius ventured his feeble efforts in the latest ages of Roman Literature. Some of his compositions are prettily conceived, and conducted with

judgment ; but though a close imitator of Virgil, his style is often deformed by the barbarism and vitiated taste, with which, long before his age, literature had been infected. At this period, indeed, a Latin poet would not readily associate the fair attributes of peace and innocence, which are characteristic of the eclogue, with pastoral manners : For the barbarous tribes, who in the fourth century, overran Italy, were chiefly Scythian Shepherds, whose restless spirit disdained the confinement of a sedentary life, and whose arms spread terror and devastation over the Garden of Europe.

After the revival of learning in Italy, pastoral poetry was one of the earliest efforts of the newly awakened muse. Naiads, Fauns, and Satyrs, were, as Dr Johnson remarks,<sup>1</sup> ever within call ; while woods and meadows, hills and rivers, always supplied the most obvious and abundant materials for images or descriptions.

But in modern, as in ancient times, the writers of pastoral poetry have been, like their sheep, a *servum pecus*. They have almost all of them followed their first leader to the accustomed glades and pastures ; and the successive painters of rural beauty, have copied the ancients without ever looking abroad themselves on the face of nature. Both Theocritus and Virgil have been followed ; but Virgil chiefly, because the imitation of refined art is easier than of native beauty.

While Pulci and Boiardo, and the other romantic

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Philips.*

poets of Italy, early burst the chains of classical imitation, and introduced the *Speciosa miracula* of Gothic mythology, instead of the worn-out fables of antiquity—Pan, the dryads, and Philomela, still kept possession of the groves, and ruled exclusively in the department of pastoral poetry, whether exhibited in a narrative or dramatic form. At this period J. B. Amaltheus and Vida, who regarded the Mantuan bard with sentiments approaching to adoration, wrote eclogues wholly in the Virgilian taste ; and even Sannazzarius, while transferring his scenes to the shore, retained the sentiments and diction of his master.

This servility arose in some degree from the imitative spirit of Roman genius, and particularly that of Virgil himself. We have already seen, that, in most branches of literature, the Romans were the slavish followers of the Greeks, from whom they derived their comedies, their tragedies, their odes, and in general all their notions of poetry, and the other fine arts. Besides, the character of Virgil's genius was of that kind, which, being better qualified to embellish than create, adorns by the aid of fine taste the thoughts of others, and bestows on them, by dignity of versification and choice of expression, a majesty and sweetness of which they were not before possessed. But, because Virgil copied from Theocritus, most subsequent pastoral writers appear to have considered it as a kind of literary transgression, to introduce novelty into their compositions, and seem to have thought it necessary to follow everywhere the track of the Mantuan bard. Hence, in pastoral poetry, more than in any other, a



set of hereditary names, and of conventional terms and images, has been continued from one poet to another, without due regard to the differences of times or climates. Shepherds have been brought from Sicily or Arcadia ; swans from the Mæander or Mincius ; and deities from Greece or Latium. The shepherds, in Pope's pastorals, yield thanks to Ceres for a plenteous harvest, and propose to sacrifice a milk-white bull to Apollo ; and Gesner's Idyls, which have been so much extolled by Florian,<sup>1</sup> Dr Blair,<sup>2</sup> and Heyne,<sup>3</sup> abound with the absurdities of fauns, satyrs, and dryads. We have thus been wearied by a repetition of the same common-place images, childish conceits, and incidents which, though probable, or even real in ancient times, and under a Sicilian sky, are but extravagant and miserable fiction, when adapted to the manners of modern times, or the customs of northern latitudes. For example, that kind of pastoral combat, and extemporary recitation, which we meet with so often in Theocritus and Virgil, and which was not unfrequent in regions where the imagination was warm and the language flexible, has been often absurdly imitated in the writings of the poets of the most rigid nations.

Hume, in his *Essay on Refinement in Composition*, has remarked, that of all the great poets, Virgil is the farthest removed from the two extremities of simplicity or coarseness, on the one hand, and too high refinement, on the other. But almost all the

<sup>1</sup> Essai sur la Pastorale. *Estelle*.

<sup>2</sup> *Lectures on Rhetoric*, &c. Lect. 39.

<sup>3</sup> *De Carminc Bucol. pref. ad oper. Virgil.*

modern imitators of Virgil have been guilty of great excess in these opposite qualities, and have fluctuated between them, according to the fancy of the poet, the degree of his veneration for the models of antiquity, or of his prejudices in favour of the manners of his own country. The swains of the Italian dramatic pastorals are fictitious beings, whose manners correspond to their ideal characters, whose sentiments are often glittering conceits, and whose language possesses an extreme of elegance and refinement inconsistent with rural simplicity. Among the French pastoral writers, Ronsard was coarse, while the *Pasteurs Galants* of Fontenelle, (though the author has written an excellent discourse on the rules of pastoral poetry,) have been long proverbial for their fantastic absurdity. Instead of following his own golden rule, that the dress of shepherds, though composed of stuffs finer than those of real peasants, should be fashioned in the rustic mode, his swains are all attired in the dress of a court or a masquerade, and are better fitted for the *boudoirs* of Paris than the banks of the Lignon. He now puts madrigals into their mouths, and now subtile metaphysical reflections : “ Il croit,” says a critic of his own country, “ devoir faire de ses bergers des raisonneurs, des dissertateurs, qui parlent d’amour avec beaucoup de sagacité. C’est une chose assez singulière de voir comme ces gens là connoissent le cœur humain, comme ils decouvrent les ressorts qui le font agir, comme ils le sondent dans ses plus secrets replis. Enfin, lorsque vous croyez de bonne foi être à la campagne avec Tyrsis et Sylvie,

vous etes tout étonné de ne voir auprès de vous que le Marquis et la Comtesse ; ce n'étoit pas la peine de quitter la ville.”<sup>1</sup> Chivalry had not banished the gods of Greece from pastorals, but it had introduced into them much of the gallantry of the middle ages.

In the English language, Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar* is the most original pastoral we possess. We find in it great variety of beautiful natural landscapes ; but his imitation of Chaucer has occasionally rendered his style rude and antiquated, and the allegorical vein that runs through his *Calendar* has produced obscurity, and detracted from that simplicity and smoothness, which form the charm of pastoral composition. “ Spenser,” says Dr Johnson, in his *Rambler*,<sup>2</sup> “ begins one of his pastorals with studied barbarity—

Diggon Davie, I bid her good day ;  
Or Diggon her is, or I missay.  
Dig. Her was her while it was daylight,  
But now her is a most wretched wight.”

These lines, however, are scarcely a fair specimen of the *Shepherd's Calendar*. It is only in the ninth eclogue, or *September*, that Spenser has affected this provincial jargon ; and he adopted it there, in order to disguise the real purport and character of the piece. Drayton, who was nearly contemporary with Spenser, has taken him for his model in his eclogues. “ The subject of pastorals,” he says, in his preface, “ like the language of it, ought to be poor, silly, and of the

<sup>1</sup> Malfilatre, *Genie de Virgile*.

<sup>2</sup> No. 37.



coarsest woof in appearance." He has not always written, however, on these erroneous principles. There are many beautiful passages in his eclogues, and their style is more refined and modern than might be expected from the age in which the author lived, or than he himself employed in his *Polyolbion* and *Heroical Epistles*. Browne's *Britannia's Pastorals* are rather a series of pastoral tales or narratives than eclogues; but his *Shepherd's Pipe*, is more coarse than the strains of either Spenser or Drayton.

In the *Shepherd's Calendar* and Drayton's eclogues, Cuddy and Hobbinol, Winken and Gorbo, took the place of Damon and Daphnis; but they did not long hold possession of the fields.

At length, in the reign of Queen Anne, there arose a sort of rivalry and contest between the patrons of the refined and natural styles in this species of composition. In the very beginning of that reign, Walsh had made several feeble attempts in the classical style. Pope, soon after, professedly imitated Virgil, and laboured to be elegant; but his themes and topics are trite, and the chief merit of his pastorals lies in purity of expression, and in the smoothness of his versification, which is as terse and harmonious as that of his most mature productions. Pope's pastorals were received with an applause which excited the emulation of Ambrose Philips, a contemporary poet, who attempted to correct the public taste by a specimen of poetry, in which rural scenes and manners should be exhibited without any embellishment of nature. His pastorals were therefore, in their language and inci-

dents, of a more simple and rustic cast. Their simplicity, however, admitted of being placed in a ludicrous point of view, and Pope excited a laugh against them by an ironical paper in the *Guardian*. Gay entered the field as an auxiliary to Pope ; and, by way of exaggerating the ridicule which had been thrown on vulgar pastoral, he wrote a series of pieces, in which the real manners of country clowns were intended to be painted, without any fictitious softening. But the result was different from what he or his friends expected ; for these burlesque pastorals became the most popular compositions of that class in the language. To some the ridicule must no doubt have been sufficiently obvious ; but such is the charm of reality, and so grateful to the general feelings are images drawn from rural scenes, that they were enjoyed by many as faithful copies of nature.

Although, therefore, censure may justly fall on those writers, who, from too close an imitation of Virgil, have shocked us by the incongruous introduction of Pagan mythology, and by injudicious pictures of ancient manners, he is the best example that can be followed in avoiding those extremes of coarseness and refinement, which have been, in modern times, the Scylla and Charybdis of pastoral poets :

Entre les deux excès la route est difficile ;  
 Suivez, pour la trouver, Théocrite et Virgile.  
 Que leurs tendres écrits, par les Graces dictés,  
 Ne quittent point vos mains, jour et nuit feuilletés.  
 Seuls, dans leurs doctes vers, ils pourront vous apprendre  
 Par quel art sans bassesse un auteur peut descendre ;

Et par quel art encore l'éclogue quelquefois  
Rend dignes d'un consul la campagne et les bois.<sup>1</sup>

Theocritus is perhaps a little too coarse, and Virgil, at least in his Eclogues, somewhat too refined ; but they are the best guides that can be followed by the pastoral poet. They will lead him to the sweetest pastures, the clearest streams, and the most shady groves ; they will people his fields with shepherds, plain and simple, but not gross or ignorant,—tender and imaginative, but not courtly or fantastic,—and speaking a language artless, but not rude,—elegant, yet not elaborate.

While poets, who from their other writings have climbed to the highest niche in the fane of glory, have failed in their pastoral compositions, from want of due skill in steering between the extreme points of rudeness and refinement, Scotland may boast, that one of her native poets has earned the woodland wreath, which Pope and Tasso failed to gain. For though the scenes of the *Gentle Shepherd* be as free from fantastic refinement as the Idyls of Theocritus, and from coarseness as the Eclogues of Virgil, its author has wisely abjured all imitation of these poets in their mythology, localities, and manners. He had formed a different estimate of pastoral composition from those writers, who considered it essential to this sort of poetry to talk of Pan and Diana, with their nymphs and satyrs. In his descriptions, the morning rises as in the Scotch horizon : “ We are not carried

<sup>1</sup> Boileau, *Art. Poët.* ch. 2.



to Greece and Italy for a shade, a stream, or a breeze.  
The groves rise in our own valleys, the rivers flow  
from our own fountains, and the winds blow from our  
own hills :

“ In *thy* sweet Caledonian lines  
Nae gowden stream mid myrtles twines,  
Where Philomel,  
While nightly breezes sweep the vines,  
Her griefs will tell.

" In gowany glens *thy* burnie strays,  
Where bonnie lasses bleach their claes,  
Or trots by hazelly shaws, and braes  
Wi' hawthorn gray,  
Where blackbirds join the shepherd's lays  
At close of day."<sup>1</sup>

In the *Gentle Shepherd* we have also some pictures of internal domestic comfort, which are perhaps the only novelty the moderns have introduced into pastoral poetry. The evening blaze from the *ingle* glancing on the sanded floor, and on the ruddy face of the peasant, forms a part of the rural picture as much as the rosy rays of morning. In consequence, probably, of the delightful climate he enjoyed, all Virgil's scenes are beneath the open sky. Horace, and Tibullus "dives foco lucente," seem, indeed, to have understood the comforts of a good fire; but Virgil is ever mentioning, among the chief pleasures of a country life, the coolness of shades and rivers, vales and grot-

<sup>1</sup> Burns.

toes, which a northern poet would have sometimes varied by descriptions of a fireside, or a sunny hill. The Mantuan shepherds recline in a cave, or under a spreading beech, and their festivals are held, in the open air, near the rustic altars of Ceres or Pomona.

The poem, entitled the *Georgics*, which, in succession of time, was the next work of Virgil, is as remarkable for majesty and magnificence of diction, as the Eclogues are for sweetness and harmony of versification.

It is the most complete, elaborate, and finished poem in the Latin, or perhaps any other language ; and though the choice of subject, and the situations, afforded less expectation of success than the pastorals, so much has been achieved by art and genius, that the author has chiefly exhibited himself as a poet on topics where it was difficult to appear as such.

Rome, from its local situation, was not well adapted for commerce ; and from the time of Romulus to that of Cæsar, agriculture had been the chief care of the Romans. Its operations were conducted by the greatest statesmen, and its precepts inculcated by the profoundest scholars.

The long continuance, however, and cruel ravages of the civil wars, had now occasioned an almost general desolation. Italy was, in a great measure, depopulated of its husbandmen. The soldiers by whom the lands were newly occupied, had too long ravaged the fields to think of cultivating them ; and, in con-

sequence of the farms lying waste, a famine and insurrection had nearly ensued—

Quippe ubi fas versum atque nefas, tot bella per orbem,  
 Tam multæ scelerum facies, non ullus aratro  
 Dignus honos; squalent abductis arva colonis,  
 Et curvæ rigidum falces conflantur in ensem.<sup>1</sup>

In these circumstances Mæcenas resolved, if possible, to revive the decayed spirit of agriculture, to recall the lost habits of peaceful industry, and to make rural improvement, as it had been in former times, the prevailing amusement among the Great: And he wisely judged, that no method was so likely to contribute to these important objects, as a recommendation of agriculture by all the insinuating charms of poetry. At his suggestion, accordingly, Virgil commenced his *Georgics*, which was thus in some degree undertaken from a political motive, and with a view to promote the welfare of his country; and as in the eclogue which announces the return of the golden age, he strived to render his woods worthy of a consul, so in his *Georgics* he studied to make his fields deserving of Mæcenas and Augustus.

But though written with a patriotic object—by order of a Roman statesman—and on a subject peculiarly Roman, the imitative spirit of Latin poetry still prevailed, and the author could not avoid recurring even in his *Georgics* to a Grecian model. A few verses on the signs and prognostics of weather have been translated from the *Phænomena* of Aratus. But

<sup>1</sup> *Georg.* Lib. I. v. 505.



the *Works and Days of Hesiod* is the pattern which he has chiefly held in view. In reference to his imitation of this model, he himself styles his *Georgics* an Ascræan poem ; and he appears, indeed, to have been a sincere admirer of the ancient bard. When, in the sixth eclogue, Gallus is conducted by the Muses to Helicon, Linus presents him with the pipes of Hesiod—

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Quibus ille solebat  
Cantando rigidas deducere montibus ornos.

In the *Works and Days*, Hesiod, after a description of the successive ages of the world, points out the various means for procuring an honest livelihood. Of these, the proper exercise of agriculture is one of the principal. He accordingly gives directions for the labours of the field, and enumerates those days on which the various operations of husbandry ought to be performed.

It is chiefly, then, in the first and second books of the *Georgics*, (where Virgil discourses on tillage and planting,) that he has imitated the *Works and Days*. Hesiod has not treated of the breeding of cattle, or care of bees, which form the subjects of the third and fourth books of the Roman poet. But in the former books he has copied his predecessor in some of the most minute precepts of agriculture, as well as in his injunctions with regard to the superstitious observance of days.

Virgil's arrangement of his topics is at once the most natural, and that which best carries his reader

along with him. He begins with the preparation of the inert mass of earth, and the sowing of grain, which form the most intractable parts of his subject. Then he discloses to our view a more open prospect and wider horizon—leading us among the rich and diversified scenes of nature, the shades of vineyards, and blossom of orchards. He next presents us with pictures of joyous and animated existence. The useful herds, the courageous horse, the Nomades of Africa and Scythia pass before us, and the fancy is excited by images of the whole moving creation. He at length concludes with those insects, which have formed themselves into a well-ordered community, and which, in their nature, laws, and government, seem most nearly to approach the human species.

Many of Virgil's rules, particularly those concerning the care of cattle, have been taken from the works of the ancient agricultural writers of his own country. Seneca, indeed, talks lightly of the accuracy and value of his precepts: But Columella speaks of him as an agricultural oracle, (*verissimo vati velut oraculo crediderimus,*) and all modern travellers, who have had occasion to examine the mode of agriculture even at this day practised in Italy, bear testimony to his exactness in the minutest particulars. His precepts of the most sordid and trivial description are delivered with dignity, and the most common observations have received novelty or importance by poetic embellishment. Thus, when warning the farmer that he will reap no crop, unless some operation of husbandry be duly performed, he tells him—

Heu, magnum alterius frustra spectabis acervum ;  
 Concussâque famem in sylvis solabere quercu.

And how poetically and ornamentally does he express the effects of grafting !—

Exiit ad cœlum ramis felicior arbos,  
 Miraturque novas frondes et non sua poma.

It is thus that he contrives, by converting rules into images, to give a picturesque colouring, or illustration, to the most unpromising topics, to scatter roses amid his fields, and to cover as it were with verdure, the thorns and briers of agricultural discussion. This talent of expressing with elegance what is trifling and in itself little attractive, is one of the most difficult arts of poetry, and no poet ever knew better than Virgil

Angustis hunc addere rebus honorem.

But, though Virgil has inculcated his precepts with as much clearness, elegance, and dignity, as the nature of his subject admits, and even in this respect has greatly improved on Hesiod, still it is not on these precepts that the chief beauty of the *Georgics* depends. With the various discussions on corn, vines, cattle, and bees, he has interwoven every philosophical, moral, or mythological episode, on which he could with propriety seize. In all didactic poems, the episodes are the chief embellishments. The noblest passages of Lucretius, are those in which he so sincerely paints the charms of virtue, and delights of modera-



tion and contentment. In like manner, the finest verses of Virgil, are his invocations to the gods—his addresses to Augustus—his account of the prodigies before the death of Cæsar, and his description of Italy. How beautiful and refreshing are his praises of a country life—how solemn and majestic his encomium on the sage, who had triumphed, as it were, over the power of destiny, who had shut his ears to the murmurs of Acheron, and dispelled from his imagination those invisible and inaudible phantoms, which wander on the other side of death !

In these, and many other passages, it is evident, that Virgil contends with Lucretius, and strives hard to surpass him. There is a close resemblance in the topics, on which these two poets descant, but a wide difference between them in tone and manner. Lucretius is more bold and simple than his successor, and displays more of the *vivida vis animi* : but his outlines are harder, and we never find in Virgil, any of those rugged verses, or unpolished expressions, which we so frequently encounter in Lucretius.<sup>1</sup> In the theological parts, and those which relate to a state of future existence, Lucretius assumes, as it were, an air and tone of defiance, while Virgil is more calm, contemplative, and resigned.

As the works of Virgil were never completely forgotten during the dark ages, or, at all events, were the

<sup>1</sup> Compare *Georg.* Lib. II. v. 323, with *Lucretius*, Lib. I. v. 251, &c. ; Lib. II. v. 458, &c. with Lib. II. v. 24 ; Lib. III. v. 289, with Lib. I. v. 137 ; and Lib. IV. v. 1, and Lib. III. v. 478, &c. with Lib. VI. v. 1136, &c.

first classical productions which were brought to light and studied at the revival of literature, we find imitations of the *Georgics*, in the earliest poets, who appeared after that period.—The “*Rusticus*” of Politian “*in Virgilio Georgicon enarratione pronunciata*,” is an abridgment of the subject of that poem, and several passages are nearly copied from it. Of other modern Latin poems, which have been written in imitation of the *Georgics*, Vaniere’s *Prædium Rusticum* approaches nearest to it in the subject ; but it is a tedious and languid production : “*Le poëte Romain*,” says Delille, “*est plus agréable dans les détails arides que le poëte Toulousain dans les objets les plus rians. Celui-ci exprime quelquefois prosaïquement les objets les plus poétiques : L’autre revêt de la plus belle poésie les objets les plus simples.*” The Italian poem of Alamanni, in six books, entitled “*Della Coltivazione*,” enlarges on the various topics discussed in the first three books of Virgil ; while Ruccellai, the countryman and contemporary of Alamanni, has, in his poem *Le Api*, nearly translated the fourth book, omitting, however, the fable of Aristæus. Both these poems, in *versi sciolti*, are written with much elegance and purity of style, and contain many passages, which might bear a comparison with the most celebrated parts of the immortal work, on which they were modelled.

A few lines in the fourth book have also given to Rapin the hint for his Latin poem, *Horti* ; but, as Addison has remarked, “*there is more pleasantness in the little platform of a garden, which Virgil gives*

us, than in all the spacious walks and water-works of Rapin." The same subject has been enlarged on, by Delille, who was a translator and enthusiastic admirer of Virgil, and has borrowed from him some of the finest passages, both in *Les Jardins*, and his other poem, *L'homme des Champs*, which may be considered as a continuation of the *Georgics*, by adding a moral part to the Latin poem. St Lambert, in his *Saisons*, and Roucher, in his *Mois*, have also frequently availed themselves of the *Georgics*. It is impossible here to point out particular imitations; but it may be observed of these poems in general, that they are vague and diffuse, and never reach that pregnant brevity of style, by which their great original is distinguished.

It has been remarked by Warton, that of all our English poems, " Philips's *Cider*, which is a close imitation of the *Georgics*, conveys to us the fullest idea of Virgil's manner, whom he hath exactly followed in conciseness of style, in throwing in frequent moral reflections, in varying the method of giving his precepts, in his digressions, and in his happy address in returning again to his subject; in his knowledge, and love of philosophy, medicine, agriculture, and antiquity, and in a certain primeval simplicity of manners, which is so conspicuous in both."

But no English poet has been so much indebted to Virgil for his fame as Thomson. In his *Seasons*, he sometimes assembles together different passages from the *Georgics*, and sometimes scatters verses belonging to the same passage through different parts



of his own production ; but, at other times, he translates straight forward. In his *Spring*, though Lucretius has also contributed a share, he has closely imitated from Virgil the description of the golden age, and of the desires which the early season excites among the brute creation. From the same source, he has borrowed, in *Summer*, many circumstances of the thunder-storm, and the panegyric on Great Britain which is parodied from the praises of Italy. The eulogy, which he introduces in his *Autumn*, on a philosophical life, may be cited as an example of the closeness with which, on some occasions, he imitates the Latin poet :

O fortunatos nimium, sua si bona nôrint,  
Agrícolas ! quibus ipsa, procul discordibus armis,  
Fundit humo facilem victum justissima tellus.  
Si non ingentem foribus domus alta superbis  
Mane salutantum totis vomit ædibus undam ;  
Nec varios inhiant pulchrâ testitudine postes,  
Illusasque auro vestes, Ephyreiaque æra ;  
Alba neque Assyrio fucatur lana veneno,  
Nec casiâ liquidi corrumpitur usus olivi ;  
At secura quies, et nescia fallere vita,  
Dives opum variarum ; at latis otia fundis,  
Speluncæ, vivique lacus ; at frigida Tempe,  
Mugitusque boum, mollesque sub arbore somni  
Non absunt : Illîc saltus, ac lustra ferarum,  
Et patiens operum, parvoque assueta juvenus,  
Sacra Deûm, sanctique patres. Extrema per illos  
Justitia excedens terris vestigia fecit.—

Oh knew he but his happiness, of men  
The happiest he ! who, far from public rage,  
Deep in the vale, with a choice few retired,

Drinks the pure pleasures of the rural life.  
What though the dome be wanting, whose proud gate  
Each morning vomits out the sneaking crowd  
Of flatterers false, and in their turn abused,—  
Vile intercourse ! What though the glittering robe,  
Of every hue reflected light can give,  
Or floating loose, or stiff with mazy gold,  
The pride and gaze of fools ! oppress him not :  
What though, from utmost land and sea purveyed,  
For him each rarer, tributary life  
Bleeds not, and his insatiate table heaps  
With luxury and death : What though his wine  
Flows not from brighter gems ; nor sunk in beds,  
Oft of gay care, he tosses out the night ;  
Or, thoughtless, sleeps at best in idle state :  
What though deprived of those fantastic joys  
That still amuse the wanton, still deceive ;  
A face of pleasure, but a heart of pain ;  
Their hollow moments undelighted all ?  
Sure peace is his ; a solid life, estranged  
To disappointment and fallacious hope ;  
Rich in content, in nature's bounty rich,  
In herbs and fruits. Whatever greens the Spring,  
When heaven descends in showers ; or bends the bough,  
When Summer reddens and when Autumn beams ;  
Or in the wintry glebe whatever lies  
Concealed, and fattens with the richest sap ;  
These are not wanting ; nor the milky drove,  
Luxuriant, spread o'er all the lowing vale,  
Nor bleating mountains, nor the chide of streams,  
And hum of bees, inviting sleep sincere  
Into the guiltless breast, beneath the shade,  
Or thrown at large amid the fragrant hay ;  
Nor aught beside of prospect, grove, or song,  
Dim grottoes, gleaming lakes, and fountains clear.  
Here, too, lives simple truth,—plain innocence,—  
Unsullied beauty,—sound, unbroken youth,  
Patient of labour, with a little pleased ;

Health ever blooming, unambitious toil,  
Calm contemplation, and poetic ease.

We come now to the *Æneid*, a work which belongs to a nobler class of poetry than the *Georgics*, and is perhaps equally perfect in its kind. It ranks indeed, in the very highest order, and it was in this exalted species that Virgil was most fitted to excel. Some poets, and those, too, of lofty degree, are best qualified to delineate the strong but fleeting emotions of the hour. Such, perhaps, were Pindar, and Petrarch, and Burns. But the highest poetical spirit does not consist in bursts of inspiration, or the transport of the moment. It has no doubt much enthusiasm, but regulated and dignified, and subjected to the understanding. It does not exhaust its strength or resources on one favourite passage, but bestows on every verse an equal care, and labours to impart perfection to the whole. It is capable of conceiving the most extensive plan, of holding it steadily in view, and of enriching it with all the treasures to be found from earth to heaven.

Such was the poetical soul of Virgil. Undisturbed by excess of passion, and never hurried away by the current of ideas, he calmly consigned to immortal verse the scenes which his fancy had first painted as lovely, and which his understanding had afterwards approved :

A golden column next in sight appeared,  
On which a shrine of purest gold was reared ;  
Finished the whole, and laboured every part,  
With patient touches of unwearied art :



The Mantuan there in sober triumph sat,  
Composed his posture, and his look sedate.<sup>1</sup>

The extent, too, and depth of the design proposed in the *Æneid*, rendered this subjection to the judgment indispensable. It would be absurd to suppose, with some critics, that Virgil intended to give instruction to princes in the art of settling colonies,<sup>2</sup> or to supply Augustus with political rules for the government and legislation of a great empire; but he evidently designed, not merely to deduce the descent of Augustus and the Romans from Æneas and his companions, but, by creating a perfect character in his hero, to shadow out the eminent qualities of his imperial patron,—to recommend his virtues to his countrymen, who would readily apply to him the amiable portrait,—and perhaps to suggest, that he was the Ruler of the world announced of old by the prophecies and oracles of the Saturnian land,—

—————Hic Cæsar, et omnis Iūli  
Progenies, magnum cœli ventura sub axem.  
Hic vir, hic est, tibi quem promitti sæpius audis,  
Augustus Cæsar, divūm genus.<sup>3</sup>

No one who has read the *Æneid*, and studied the historical character of Augustus, or the early events

<sup>1</sup> Pope's *Temple of Fame*.

<sup>2</sup> Catrou, *Œuvres de Virgile*, Tom. III. p. 486.

<sup>3</sup> *Æneid*, Lib. VI. v. 789,—“Pope used to say, that the *Æneid* was as much a party-piece as Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel*, written against the party which set the Duke of Monmouth at its head, by the instigation of Lord Shaftesbury.”—Spence's *Anecdotes*.

of his reign, can doubt, that Æneas is an allegorical representation of that emperor. The characters of both are reflective, cool, and political; and both are superstitious observers of portents, omens, and dreams.<sup>1</sup> Æneas is chiefly distinguished for his filial duty; and the great boast of Augustus was his piety towards his adoptive father Julius, from whom he had inherited the empire. The goddess Venus was the mother of Æneas; and from her the Julian line, according to tradition, was also descended. “Venus genetrix!” was their word of battle; and Julius Cæsar, in a funeral oration, pronounced for his aunt, declared,—“Amitæ meæ Juliæ maternum genus ab regibus ortum, paternum cum Dis immortalibus conjunctum est. Nam ab Anco Marcio sunt Marcii reges, quo nomine fuit mater: a Venere Julii, cujus gentis familia est nostra.”<sup>2</sup> Augustus likewise claimed this divine origin. In one of his first interviews with Antony, after the death of Cæsar, he said, among other complimentary things, that the late dictator would probably have adopted him as a son, had he thought Antony would have chosen to pass into the family of Æneas from that of the Heracleidæ.<sup>3</sup> So proud, indeed, was Augustus of his supposed Trojan descent, that he, at one time, entertained serious intentions of rebuilding Troy, and transferring to it the seat of empire; and one of the master-pieces of Horace,<sup>4</sup> is

<sup>1</sup> Sueton. *In August.* c. 91.

<sup>2</sup> Id. *In Jul. Cæs.* c. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Appian, *De Bell. Civil.* Lib. III.

<sup>4</sup> Lib. III. Od. 3.

expressly written to dissuade him from this impolitic design. Accordingly, Virgil's great object is to connect the family of Augustus with Æneas, and to prove, that the Trojan chief had acquired a title to the sovereignty of Italy by the will of the gods, his marriage with Lavinia, and the right of conquest. Hence, doubtless, the anxiety of Augustus to preserve from the flames, to which it was condemned by its author, a poem where his claims to the empire were enforced in a manner likely to prove so fascinating and popular among his Italian subjects.

Besides boasting of his divine origin, Augustus had the still farther weakness of supposing that he resembled Apollo, and of being flattered by a comparison with that radiant deity. Accordingly, the personal appearance of Æneas is likened to the figure and countenance of Apollo:—

—— Ipse ante alios pulcherrimus omnes  
 Infert se socium Æneas, atque agmina jungit.  
 Qualis, ubi hibernam Lyciam Xanthique fluenta  
 Deserit, ac Delum maternam invisit Apollo,  
 Instauratque choros, mixtique altaria circum  
 Cretesque Dryopesque fremunt, pictique Agathyrsi ;  
 Ipse jugis Cynthi graditur, mollique fluentem  
 Fronde premit crinem fingens, atque implicat auro :  
 Tela sonant humeris. Haud illo segnior ibat  
 Æneas : tantum egregio decus enitet ore. <sup>1</sup>

But farther, it was in naval engagements that Augustus was chiefly successful, and crushed the power of his formidable rivals Sextus Pompey and Antony.

<sup>1</sup> Lib. IV. 141.



Æneas, consequently, through the whole poem, is represented as the favourite of Neptune, who, on every occasion, extends to him at sea his aid and protection.

Many actions too of Augustus, and various events of his reign, are typified in the poetical incidents of the *Æneid*. Both Æneas and Augustus frequently celebrated games. Near the beginning of the third book of the *Æneid*, games are performed on the shore of Actium, of a similar description with the pastimes which Augustus instituted after the defeat of Antony. Those which Æneas celebrated in Sicily, at the tomb of Anchises, represent the funeral honours paid to Julius Cæsar, while the Apotheosis of Anchises, with the consecration of a grove and appointment of a priest,<sup>1</sup> typify the deification of Cæsar, and the worship decreed to him as a god. The sacrifice of human victims offered up by Augustus, after the capture of Perugia, to his Manes, is attempted to be justified in the tenth book, by the example of the *Pious Æneas*.

Warburton has attempted to prove, in his *Divine Legation of Moses*, that the descent of Æneas to the infernal regions is a figurative description of an initiation into the Eleusinian mysteries. The author has, no doubt, pursued the allegory too far, and has wrought up some fanciful coincidences. But in many steps of the hero's progress through the three estates of the dead, he has successfully shown the exact con-

<sup>1</sup> Lib. V. 760.

formity of his adventures with the trials undergone by the initiated. Now, it is matter of historical record, that, during a residence at Athens, Augustus passed through all the mysteries and ceremonies which the Grecian priesthood had instituted, to confirm the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments ; but he highly respected the secrecy of these rites,<sup>1</sup> and hence, Virgil was obliged to cover the whole with a thick veil of allegory.

The wars of Æneas, in the concluding books of the *Æneid*, are a typical representation of those of Augustus. In particular, the circumstances of the assault by the Trojans on the capital of King Latinus, in the twelfth book, correspond minutely with those of the siege of Perugia, which terminated the war Augustus was forced to maintain in Italy, against Fulvia and Lucius Antony, the wife and brother of the Triumvir.

Dido, an African queen, from whose snares Æneas at length, though with difficulty, escapes, represents the Egyptian Cleopatra, who employed, as is well known, every possible artifice to gain the heart of Augustus. Cleopatra, in early youth, had been expelled from her kingdom by her brother Ptolemy Auletes, and forced to seek refuge in another land, in the same manner as Dido was compelled to fly from her brother Pygmalion. The poetical, like the historical princess, is painted bold, passionate, and dissembling, but endued with the royal virtues of liberality and

<sup>1</sup> Sueton. *In August.* c. 93.

courtesy. Both were somewhat advanced in years, and both finally sought, in voluntary death, a refuge from the stings of hopeless passion and disappointed ambition.

Turnus is Antony. It is remarkable, that during the most abject age of court flattery, a certain tenderness was shown by the Latin poets towards the character of this implacable but Roman enemy of Augustus. This feeling is observable in the writings of Horace, who, in his political odes, casts all the odium on Cleopatra, but spares her infatuated lover. In like manner, none of the darker shades of disposition are thrown into the character of Turnus. He is represented as a bold though somewhat rude warrior, and an ardent lover ; and his defects are concealed, as those of Antony in some degree were, by frankness, generosity, and the lustre of a daring courage. The epithets *turbidus*, *amens*, *furens*, given to Turnus, as well as the advantages of personal beauty, (*quo pulchrior alter non fuit*,) and of noble descent, (*avis atavisque potens*,) which are assigned to him, were also applicable to Antony. That chief boasted of a descent from Hercules,<sup>1</sup> and a similar genealogy is attributed to Turnus :—

Et Turno, si prima domûs repetatur origo,  
Inachus Acrisiusque patres, mediæque Mycenæ.<sup>2</sup>

Now, Acrisius, King of Argos, or Mycenæ, was father of Danaë—Danaë was the mother of Perseus—and

<sup>1</sup> Dio Cassius,—Appian.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. VII.



Electryon, Perseus' son, was the father of Alcmæna, from whom sprung Hercules.

The rage and vexation of Turnus, when, in the tenth book, he is carried away in a vessel, in which he had embarked, being deluded by a phantom in shape of Æneas, portray the shame and agony which are said to have been so strongly felt and expressed by Antony, while flying in his galley from the battle of Actium. The catastrophe of the *Æneid* is at length brought round by Turnus's party breaking the league which they had concluded with Æneas, in the same manner as the battle of Actium was a consequence of Antony violating the terms of those treaties which had been entered into at Brundisium and Tarentum. Turnus also challenges Æneas in the twelfth book, to decide their quarrel by single combat; and Antony, in his last transports of despair, made a similar proposal to Augustus at Alexandria.

Evander, the ancient friend of Anchises, and ally of Æneas, typifies the old Cæsareans who joined the party of Augustus against Antony. Achates is Agrippa; Lavinia—Livia; Latinus—Lepidus; and the furious Amata is Fulvia, who, by her turbulent spirit, incensed the people against Cæsar, and excited the Perugian war. I should be sorry to think that Virgil meant to represent Cicero by the wretched declaimer Drances; but his enmity to Turnus, who is Antony, gives plausibility to the conjecture. The features of his character may not correspond with those of Cicero's, but they have some analogy to those which the calumnies of the age attributed to him. Drances is

a dastard in the field, pusillanimous, vituperative, boastful, and envious. He is farther represented as of illustrious birth by his mother's side, but of unknown or uncertain descent by the father's:—

— Genus huic materna superbum  
Nobilitas dabat, incertum de patre ferebat.<sup>1</sup>

Now, Plutarch, in his *Life of Cicero*, informs us, that Helvia, the mother of the orator, was of a noble family, but that nothing was reported of his father except in extremes; for while some maintained that he was the son of a fuller, and educated in his paternal trade, others deduced the origin of his family from the Volscian kings. In the harangue of Drances, too, if I am not deceived, we may discover marks of an imitation of the style of Cicero, and traces of his mode of thinking. It may appear singular, that when our poet treated the memory of Antony with such tenderness, he should have been so unjust to the reputation of Cicero. Augustus, however, had little to be ashamed of in the war with Antony, nor had he to reproach himself for his death; but the murder of Cicero was the bloody spot upon his name, which all the incense of his poets could not purify. Hence he probably might listen without uneasiness even to the praises of Antony; but the merits of Cicero had become a forbidde topic; and the greatest poet of Rome dared not to render justice to its greatest orator.

<sup>1</sup> Lib. XI.

Atterbury has written a dissertation to prove, that under the feigned name of Iapis, our poet intended to represent Antonius Musa, the physician of Augustus; Mæcenas, and Horace. Iapis attended Æneas in that hero's campaigns and voyages, but is first introduced in his medical capacity in the twelfth book, when his master was severely wounded by a javelin. He employed several methods of his art to extract the weapon; and though none for some time availed, he continued his applications, till a divine power at length came to his assistance, and crowned his efforts with success. Augustus was naturally of an infirm constitution, and subject to frequent attacks of sickness, which long baffled the skill of his physicians. His disorders came to a crisis in 729, when he was engaged in a military expedition in Spain. Antonius Musa was then with him, and saved his life by his prescriptions, both at that time and during a severe illness, which he suffered after his return to Rome. It is usually said, that the physician prescribed cold bathing;<sup>1</sup> but Pliny informs us, that he also employed lettuce, which was remarkable for its cooling properties.<sup>2</sup> Now, Iapis in like manner, with the aid of Venus, heals the wound of Æneas, by infusions of herbs and by cold ablutions:—

Multa manu medicâ Phœbique potentibus herbis, &c.

\* \* \* \*

Fovit eâ vulnus lymphâ longævus Iapis.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sueton. *In August.* c. 81.

<sup>2</sup> *Hist. Nat. Lib.* XIX. c. 8.

<sup>3</sup> *Lib.* XII. l. 420.



Iapis is likewise described as a poet, or as fond at least of poetical studies, though he had in some measure relinquished them, to devote himself to his profession :—

Ipse suas artes, sua munera lætus Apollo,  
Augurium citharamque dedit, celeresque sagittas;

Now, this part of the imaginary character is also applicable to Antonius Musa. For, in an epigram addressed to that physician, which is usually attributed to Virgil, and is at all events of the Augustan age, he is celebrated for his skill in the gifts imparted by Phoebus :—

Cui Venus ante alios, divi, divûmque sorores,  
Cuncta, neque indigno, Musa, dedere bona ;  
Cuncta, quibus gaudet Phoebus, chorus ipseque Phœbæ.

It has been conjectured by Addison, that under the name of Iopas, the philosophic musician introduced at Dido's banquet, Virgil meant to compliment some celebrated master of the Augustan court. But it seems more probable, that Iopas and Iapis represent the same individual, since, (to say nothing of the resemblance of the names,) we have seen that Iapis also was a poet, or attached at least to poetical studies. Musa, besides, who was originally a freedman of Augustus, was an African by birth, and brother of Euphorbus the physician of King Juba.<sup>1</sup>

But who, it will be asked, is Ascanius, or, as he is

<sup>1</sup> Pliny, *Hist. Nat. Lib.* XXV. c. 7.

more commonly called Iūlus, the son of Æneas? Iūlus was the name adopted by the younger members of the reigning family;<sup>1</sup> and through the whole *Æneid* it unquestionably designates the heir to Augustus, and his destined successor in the empire. At the time when Virgil commenced the *Æneid*, Marcellus was the hope of Rome, and adopted son of Augustus. But he died some years before the poem was completed; and hence, in its concluding books, we meet with many episodes which hinge on the premature deaths of amiable and beloved youths, and the grief of parents for their loss. The stories of Euryalus, Pallas, and Lausus, have all reference to this origin, while the pathetic lamentations of Evander, and the widowed mother of Euryalus, shadow out the griefs of Augustus and Octavia.

If we were more minutely acquainted with the characters and lives of the courtiers of Augustus, it might be found that a much greater number of them than we can now discover, are represented by the Trojan companions of Æneas, in the same manner as Spenser has not only typified Elizabeth under the person of the Faery Queen, but has alluded to real personages of her court, in the characters of the twelve knights, who were her champions and servants. Virgil has portrayed the leading men of his own time under the disguise of Trojan heroes. Even at the present day, we recognise in those chiefs who contend-

<sup>1</sup> Quæque tua est pietas in totum nomen Iūli.

Ovid, *Epist. e Ponto*, Lib. II.—2.

ed at the funeral games, which were celebrated at the tomb of Anchises, and of those who fought both on the Trojan and Rutulian side, the names and origin of many of the most illustrious families in Rome. There was much pride of lineage among the ancient Romans, as we know from those lying records, preserved by every great house, which have tended to introduce such confusion and uncertainty into Roman history. The various artful compliments which Virgil paid to his contemporaries by a celebration of their genealogies, ancient seats, or dominions, would thus prove highly acceptable. The Valerian family would be flattered by his mention of the Tuscan Valerus: the Claudian race would discover their founder in Clausus, who led the Sabines to the war, and the poet himself ascribes the origin of the Sergian and Cluentian families to Sergestus and Cloanthus:—

Mox Italus Mnestheus, genus a quo nomine Memmî:  
 Sergestusque, domus tenet a quo Sergia nomen,  
 Centauro invehitur magno: Scyllâque Cloanthus  
 Cæruleâ, genus unde tibi, Romane Cluenti.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the great works, and most splendid structures of Rome, are also described in the *Æneid*. By the temple of Apollo, mentioned at the commencement of the sixth book, Virgil figures the magnificent building which Augustus consecrated to that divinity on Mount Palatine. The palace of King

<sup>1</sup> *Æn.* Lib. V.



Latinus, as Servius has remarked, represents the palace of Augustus—

Tectum augustum, ingens, centum sublime columnis,  
Urbe fuit summâ—Laurentis regia Pici.

This observation of Servius is confirmed by a passage of Statius, in which he refers to Virgil's description of the residence of Latinus as a picture of the palace of Augustus, but declares, that, in that emperor's reign, it was by no means equal to what it subsequently became in the time of Domitian—

Tectum augustum, ingens, non centum insigne columnis,  
Sed quantæ Superos cœlumque, Atlante remisso,  
Sustentare queant——<sup>1</sup>

Connected with his main design of flattering Augustus and his courtiers, by exhibiting them under the characters of Trojan heroes, Virgil had another object in view—the commemoration of the ancient fables and superstitions of his country; and these he has painted with all the fire of a poet, and the accuracy of an antiquarian. The Greek traditions, which had been so novel and alluring to the Romans in the days of Ennius, had become trite in the Augustan age; and, even at the time when he was engaged in the composition of the *Georgics*, Virgil was aware, that they had lost much of their interest among his countrymen, and that some other machinery must be employed by the epic bard who was covetous of fame:

<sup>1</sup> *Sylv.* IV. 2.

Omnia jam vulgata. Quis aut Eurysthea duram,  
 Aut illaudati nescit Busiridis aras?  
 Cui non dictus Hylas puer, et Latonia Delos,  
 Hippodameque, humeroque Pelops insignis eburno,  
 Acer equis? Tentanda via est, quâ me quoque possim  
 Tollere humo, victorque virum volitare per ora.

The native Italian traditions were indeed inferior in splendour and beauty to those of Greece. There is little grace or dignity in the prodigy of the swarm of bees, that hung in clusters from the Laurentian laurel—in the story of the robber Cacus vomiting flames—the ships metamorphosed into nymphs—the sow which farrowed thirty white pigs, and thereby announced that the town of Alba would be founded by Ascanius in the course of thirty years, or the hideous harpy which hovered round the head of Turnus, and portended his death. But though these were their own native fictions, they had more novelty for the Italians, in the days of Virgil, than stories of Pelops, Hippodame, or Hylas. Besides, as Virgil had fixed the epic action on the Italian soil, its legends were most appropriate to the scene; and his poem would have been altogether incongruous, had he transported to Latium or Etruria the current fables of Thessaly and Peloponnesus.

The frame which Virgil selected for the double purpose he had in view, was the establishment of the Trojan Æneas in Italy, and revival of Troy in Latium—nearly one half of the poem comprehending the adventures of this hero, while sailing in quest of the Italian shore, and the other the wars in

which he found himself involved before he could effect his settlement.

All the excellencies of an epic poem, as well as of a romance, may be comprised, I think, under the *subject* or *nuda materia*, as it has been called—the *disposition of the incidents*—and the *ornaments*.

Now, the principal merits of the subject, or story, appear to be *novelty*, *probability*, and *variety*, of incident.

The chief objection which critics in all ages have urged against the *Æneid*, or at least against the poetical character of its author, is the defect in what forms the most essential quality of a poet—originality and the power of invention. It has never, indeed, been denied that he possessed a species of invention, if it may be so called, which consists in placing ideas, that have been pre-occupied, in a new light, or presenting assemblages, which have been already exhibited, in a new point of view. Nor has it been disputed that he often succeeds in bestowing on them the charm of novelty, by the power of more perfect diction, and by that poetic touch which transmutes whatever it lights on into gold. But it is alleged, that he has contrived few new incidents, and opened up no new veins of thought. We have already seen, that the dramatic writers of Rome, instead of contriving plots of their own, translated the master-pieces of Sophocles, Euripides, and Menander. The same imitative spirit naturally enough prevailed in the first attempts at epic poetry. When any beautiful model exists in an art, it so engrosses and intimidates the



mind, that we are apt to think that, in order to execute successfully any work of a similar description, the approved prototype must be imitated. It is supposed, that what had pleased once must please always; and circumstances, in themselves unimportant, or perhaps accidental, are converted into general and immutable rules. It was natural, then, for the Romans, struck with admiration at the sublime and beautiful productions of the epic muse of Greece, to follow her lessons with servility. The mind of Virgil also led him to imitation. His excellence lay in the propriety, beauty, and majesty of his poetical character,—in his judicious contrivance of composition, his correctness of drawing, his purity of taste, his artful adaptation of the conceptions of others to his own purposes, and his skill in the combination of materials.

Accordingly, when Virgil first applied himself to frame a poem, which might celebrate his imperial master, and emulate the productions of Greece, in a department of poetry, wherein she was as yet unrivalled, he first naturally bent a reverent eye on Homer; and though he differed widely from his Grecian master, in the qualities of his mind and genius, he became his most strict and most devoted disciple. The Latin dramatists, in preparing their pieces for the stage, had frequently compounded them of the plots of two Greek plays, melted as it were into one; and thus compensated for the want of invention, and severe simplicity of composition, by greater richness and variety of incident. From their example, Virgil com-

prehended in his plan, the arguments both of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*—the one serving him as a guide for the wanderings and adventures of his hero, previously to the landing in Latium, and the other as a model for the wars, which he sustained in Italy, to gain his destined bride Lavinia. He had thus before him all the beauties and defects of Homer, as lights to gaze at, and as rocks to be shunned, with the judgment of ages on both, as a chart which might conduct him to yet greater perfection. In the *Iliad*, however, there was this superiority, that a sense of injury (easily communicated to the reader) existed among the Greeks; and in the *Odyssey*, we feel as it were the hero's desire of returning to his native country. But both these ruling principles of action are wanting in the *Æneid*, where the Trojans rather inflict than sustain injury, and reluctantly seek a settlement in new and unknown lands.

Though the two great poems of Homer were the leading objects of Virgil's imitation, and supplied the ground-work of the noble edifice which he reared, there were other Greek epics, (some of them now lost,) which also furnished him with materials for its construction. If, in the first book, he has followed the *Odyssey*, for the storm which disperses the Trojan fleet, and for the arrival of Æneas at the court of Carthage, he has had recourse, in the second, to more obscure sources.

The destruction of an ancient populous city, with all those scenes of devastation and horror, which necessarily attend it, is one of the most tragical events

that occur in the history of the world. Virgil, accordingly, chose it as the most proper subject imaginable to move the passions of terror and pity: And it would appear that he was particularly pleased with this topic, which happened to have been left almost untouched by Homer. In point of interest and animation, the second book of the *Æneid* is the finest in the poem, and the emotions it excites are more powerful than those produced by all the military movements in the war between the Trojans and the Rutuli. How skillfully is Sinon introduced, and how artfully is his fraudulent design concealed under the most insinuating address and plausible sincerity! How striking the horrors of that fatal night, on which Troy was lost—how sublime the manifestation of the deities, hostile to Troy, co-operating with the Greeks in its destruction—how terrible the picture of Pyrrhus—how tragical the death of Priam, slain in the temple, and on the corse of his favourite son; but above all, how striking the manner in which he has painted the courage, and described the exploits of Æneas—his agitation on beholding the fall of Troy, and his alarms and terror, while bearing Anchises from the flames! The outline of some of these pathetic incidents may be found in one of the books of the *Odyssey*. But Virgil has chiefly had recourse for them to two Greek works, now lost, belonging to the Cyclic class of poems, entitled, *Ιλίου περσις* and *Ιλίας μικρά*, the former by Arctinus, a Milesian; and the latter by Lesches or Lescheus, a native of Lesbos, both of whom flourished some time after the Homeric age. From a fragment



of Proclus, it appears that the subject of the *Ιλίου μίχρα* began immediately after the decision of the contest between Ajax and Ulysses concerning the arms of Achilles, and was continued till the introduction of the wooden horse within the walls, and the sack of Troy, during the unguarded repose of its inhabitants, after a festival. It comprehended the incidents of Astyanax thrown from a tower—the loss of Eurydice, the wife of Æneas, whom Virgil calls Creusa—Meges wounded by Admetus, and Lycomedes by Agenor, in the night-battle within the walls—Astynous and Eioneus slain by Neoptolemus—Admetus by Philoctetes, and Coræbus by Diomed. Priam is also killed by Neoptolemus, after being dragged from the altar to the gates of the temple. But on this last subject Virgil has followed the more common tradition founded on the relation of Arctinus, in the *Ιλίου περσικ*, where Priam is slain in the recesses of the temple, while clinging to the altar of Jupiter. From Arctinus, Virgil likewise derived the incident of Æneas withdrawing to Mount Ida, after the sack of Troy, as also, of Helen killing Deiphobus, and returning to Sparta with her former husband Menelaus.

Besides the poems of Lesches and Arctinus, Virgil is supposed to have been largely indebted to a work, entitled, *Τα Τρώια*, which treated of the concluding scenes of the Trojan war. The story of Laocoon, which shines so conspicuously in the second book of the *Æneid*, was probably derived from Euphoriion, a celebrated Alexandrian poet, who wrote expressly on that catastrophe. If we may believe Macrobius, a

great part of the second book was literally translated from a Greek poet, called Pisander, whose work commenced with the nuptials of Jupiter and Juno, and being brought down to the author's own time, included within its compass all the events of the Trojan war, particularly the fraud of Sinon, and the contrivance of the wooden horse.<sup>1</sup> The researches of Heyne, however, have led to some suspicion, that in this passage, Macrobius has confounded the old poet called Pisander, with a more modern writer of the same name, who lived during the reign of the Emperor Alexander Severus, and wrote a poem on the subject of the Trojan war, which was extant in the time of Macrobius, and was erroneously attributed by him to the elder Pisander.

Connected with their Cyclic productions on the events of the Trojan war, the Greeks had a class of poems, called *Νοστοί*, hingeing on the adventures of the Grecian chiefs, on their voyages homeward from Troy, and immediately after their return to their native countries. These compositions, of which the chief was a poem, by Lysimachus, the Alexandrian, supplied materials for the *third* book of the *Æneid*, particularly the story of Pyrrhus, Helenus, and Andromache, which forms so large and interesting a portion of the relation of Æneas to Dido.

The concluding incidents of the Trojan war, and the misfortunes of the Grecian chiefs on their return, had also been favourite topics of the Greek tragic writers.

<sup>1</sup> *Saturnal. Lib. V. c. 2.*

Aristotle mentions, in his *Poetics*, that the Ἰλιάς μικρά had supplied the subjects of at least eight tragedies. Sophocles was the author of two dramas, of which one was entitled *Sinon*, and the other *Laocoon*; and from the *Hecuba* of Euripides, Virgil derived the circumstances of his story of Polydore.<sup>1</sup> Most of the Greek tragedies had been translated by Ennius, Attius, and Pacuvius. We find, among the titles of plays attributed to Pacuvius, an *Anchises* and *Neoptolemus*; and among those of Attius, an *Astyanax*, *Andromache*, and *Deiphobus*. Virgil, whose genius was by nature highly dramatic, frequently availed himself of these productions to add dignity, energy, and pathos to his narrative, and in some passages theatric eloquence to his dialogue.

The *fourth* book may have been partly suggested by the stories of Calypso in the *Odyssey*, and of Theseus and Ariadne in Catullus; but Virgil has more closely imitated the passion of Medea for Jason, and the adventure of that chief with Hypsipyle, Queen of Lemnos, in the *Argonautics* of Apollonius Rhodius, an author who was well known at Rome, having been translated into Latin verse by Varro Attacinus. Next to Homer, Apollonius is the author whom Virgil has chiefly followed through the whole *Æneid*; and though the Rhodian was a writer of a very different style and school of poetry from Homer, no incongruity appears in Virgil's imitations. These two

<sup>1</sup> "Est ingens ei," says Macrobius, "cum Græcarum tragediarum scriptoribus familiaritas."—*Saturnal.* Lib. V. c. 13.



Greek poets have also been his chief models for the games celebrated in Sicily at the tomb of Anchises, which occupy the greater part of the *fifth* book. To all these imitations, however, from the Greek poets, Virgil has given an air of originality, by constant allusions to his own times and country, which are always introduced with strict propriety, and conducted with great judgment. Juno is characterised in the *Iliad* by her dislike to the Trojans; but in the *Æneid*, her favour to Carthage, added to the other feeling, unites her hatred with Roman story. The departure of Æneas from Dido, by command of the gods, resembles the abandonment of Calypso; but the Latin poet has laid, in the dying imprecations of Dido, the germ of the rivalry between Rome and Carthage—

Tum vos, O Tyrii, stirpem et genus omne futurum  
 Exercete odiis; cinerique hæc mittite nostro  
 Munera: nullus amor populis nec fœdera sunt.  
 Exoriare aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor;  
 Qui face Dardanios ferroque sequare colonos.  
 Nunc olim quocunque dabunt se tempore vires,  
 Littora littoribus contraria, fluctibus undas  
 Imprecor, arma armis; pugnent ipsique nepotes.

Virgil's sixth book is the most original in his poem, and must have been peculiarly interesting to the ancients, bred up in superstitious reverence of the dark fables it records—especially to the Romans, who saw towards its close a view of their glorious race, and its most illustrious heroes. The evocation of the manes, in the manner in which they are raised in the eleventh book of the *Odyssey*, had been an old superstition;

but we learn from Pausanias, that, in some of the poems entitled *Nostos*, an actual descent to the infernal regions had been described ; and Hesiod, too, had conducted Theseus to hell in search of Pirithous. Virgil, however, has embellished the descent of Æneas by throwing over the whole the mystic veil of Platonic philosophy, and by adapting the machinery to the most luminous characters and events in the history of his country. This book has generally been considered as the most exquisite specimen of Virgilian art and power ; and it is no doubt sufficiently majestic, poetical, and solemn. But the scenes which lie on the other side of mortal existence are too fully unfolded, and too distinctly brought before our view to awaken any of those emotions of supernatural fear, which are excited when the visionary and spiritual world is only half revealed, or its secrets darkly intimated. Perhaps the fables of antiquity were too bright and palpable to inspire those feelings of awe, which are produced by the twilight obscurity of the Gothic superstitions. The indistinctness of the images of Dante, his *parole di colore oscuro*, are more fearfully impressive than the most vivid pictures. The ghost of Hamlet is more unearthly and appalling than the classic shades of Clytemnestra and Darius.

In the *seventh*, and all the following books, the Homeric battles are constantly kept in view. The council, too, of the gods—the description of the shield of Æneas—the review of the army—the episode of Nisus and Euryalus—are all formed on the model of the *Iliad*. But Virgil has, at the same time, skil-

fully availed himself of the current traditions of his country, concerning the arrival of Æneas and the ancient state of Italy. That the old annalists of Rome had treated fully of Æneas, appears from the histories of Dionysius Halicarnassus and Livy, and from the fragments of chronicles cited by Aurelius Victor, in his book *De Origine Gentis Romanæ*. As anciently as the time of Homer, there was a prediction of sovereign power to the descendants of Æneas,<sup>1</sup> and a general tradition had long fixed their seat of empire in Italy. The myths of the concluding books of the *Æneid* are chiefly those of the Ausonians and Aborigines, who occupied Italy at the time when Æneas was supposed to have landed near the mouth of the Tiber. Of this description are the fables concerning the sibyl, and the localities of her cave, the story of Camilla, the prediction of eating the trenchers, and the traditions with regard to Juturna, and other indigenous deities. In all these Italian legends, there is a gloom and chillness which (as already observed) render them less susceptible of poetical embellishment than the animated fables of the Greeks. But it must have been delightful to a Roman to read of the origin of Tibur, Tusculum, and Præneste, and of the ancient appearance of the hills which were then covered with the palaces of their patricians, senators, and kings.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Νυν δὲ δὴ 'Αινείας βῆ Τρώεσσι νῆα ἀναξεί,  
καὶ παῖδες παίδων, τοὶ κεν μετοπίσθ' ἔγενοντο

Υ. v. 307.

<sup>2</sup> For Virgil's imitations of Ennius, and the other ancient poets of his own country, see above, Vol. I. p. 121. (2d ed.) These, how-



Our poet has just so far availed himself of ancient traditions, as to give *probability* to his narration, and support it by the *prisca fides facto*. He wrote, however, at such a distance of time from the events which formed the ground-work of his poem, and the events themselves were so obscure, that he could depart from history without violating probability. Thus it appears from chronology, that Dido lived many hundred years after the Trojan war; but the point was one of obscure antiquity, known, perhaps, to few readers, and not very precisely ascertained. Hence, so far was the violence offered to chronology from revolting his countrymen, that Ovid, who was so knowing in ancient histories and fables, wrote a heroic epistle as addressed from Dido to Æneas. An epic poet, however, must on no occasion destroy the credence of reality, by swerving from the well-known stubborn facts of history; and though, in the case of Dido and Æneas, he might with advantage “make former times shake hands with latter,” he could not with impunity have represented Hannibal as contemporary with Romulus or Pompey. Probability is the soul of poetry, as truth is of history; and it is the chief triumph of the poet’s art to accord verisimilitude with those marvellous adventures, in which the “*amantes mira Camœnæ*” so much delight; and by minuteness of painting, by truth in the descriptions,

ever, are imitations, though often very close, of particular lines, and not of poetical incidents; though probably some of the latter class might have been discovered, had the writings of the old bards survived.

and by the charm of easy versification, to induce a hypothetic voluntary faith in the existence of those imaginary beings, and the reality of those wondrous fictions, which we should have rejected as illusions, if forced on us with inferior skill. This power of forming an alliance betwixt the marvellous and the probable, is one of the chief characteristics of fine poetry, and what principally distinguishes it from idle romances and from fairy tales.

“To do full justice,” says Twining, in his notes to Aristotle’s *Poetics*,—“To do full justice to the epic poem, we ought not to characterise it by any one particular and principal pleasure, but by that *variety* which is peculiar to it, and which comprehends, in some degree or other, every sort of pleasure which serious poetry can give.” Now, if we consider the *Æneid* in reference to variety of incident, we shall find, that its author has taken much pains to diversify his subject, and relieve it by contrasts. Thus the third and fifth books, which are chiefly descriptive, and in which we calmly repose, or slowly wander, as it were, under the shadow of the ancient world, have been intermixed with the second, fourth, and sixth, in which such violent emotions are excited. Almost every book of the *Æneid* has its own peculiar excellence. In the first, the poet shows his talent for raising interest and curiosity; in the second, his skilful art of narrative; in the third, his knowledge of Grecian fables and antiquities; in the fourth, his acquaintance with the human heart; and, in the sixth, his familiarity with the obscurest systems of philosophy.

In the remaining books, a new horizon, with new incidents, opens to us. By representing his hero both as a traveller and warrior, the Roman poet has contrived to unite in one composition the beauties of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. We have thus the sieges, assaults, ambuscades, pitched battles, and single combats, of the one, relieved by those minute views of the manners of antiquity, and those popular fables, by which the other is so highly embellished. By the very nature of his poem, Virgil was excluded from whatever was fantastic or ludicrous,—from everything, in short, which had not some affinity to what was elegant or majestic; but, in the compass of the chords which it was permitted him to strike, no other poet has created more variety, or addressed himself more successfully to all the higher sympathies of our nature.

Next to the subject itself, the *disposition* of the incidents is chiefly to be considered. It has been regarded as a rule in epic poetry, to break through the regular succession of time,—to set out in the middle of the story at some important period, in order to excite the mind, and rouse the curiosity by some striking event. It may, however, be doubted, whether such a deviation from the natural order of events would prove agreeable to a plain reader, unbiassed by authority, as it tends to produce a confusion of ideas, which is scarcely rectified till the story has become familiar by a second perusal.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See the propriety of this rule and practice defended by Hurd, in his *Commentary on Horace's Art of Poetry*, ad. v. 148, and controverted at great length by Gibbon, in his remarks on that commentary, *Miscellaneous Works*, Vol. IV. p. 119, &c.



The authors of the *Cypriaca*, the *Ilias parva*, the *Theseid*, and the *Heraclea*, began at the beginning, as we are informed by Aristotle. The example, however, of a greater poet having at length established a different rule and practice, Virgil adopted the plan of the *Odyssey*, which opens after Ulysses had been detained many years in the island of Calypso. But the Roman poet commences still nearer to the conclusion of his fable. His hero has already left Sicily; he is on his voyage to Italy, and has almost reached its shore. His disembarkation on the African coast, his journey through an unknown land, and his arrival at the new-built city of Carthage, are introduced in a manner admirably calculated to awaken interest and curiosity. It is more attractive to hear of the fall of Troy from the mouth, as it were, of one of the sufferers, than if it had been coolly related by the poet. "The idea," says one of Virgil's commentators, "of the night-scene adds much to the solemnity and awfulness of the relation. Indeed, the whole disposition of the scene and concomitant circumstances is, in every respect, admirable. A great prince, driven by a storm to a strange coast, entertained by a great queen, in a numerous assembly of princes, and nobles, and guards, and attendants, supposed to be listening at a distance, after a magnificent banquet in the large hall of a state-ly palace, hung round with tapers and flambeaux, in the dead of night, relates such a surprising history of wars, distresses, and travels, as was never before recorded."

An important part of the disposition is, the proper

intermixture of the episodes with the principal action. Bossu, and other French critics, have shown, at great length, the judgment of Virgil in conducting his episodes. The whole story of Dido, and those of Nisus and Euryalus, of Lausus and Mezentius, and of Camilla, have generally been reckoned among the number of episodes ; but it appears to me, that as most of these produce an alteration on the affairs of the contending parties, they cannot properly be considered as such, and that the term episode is applicable only to some event foreign to the subject, or connected with it by the slightest thread, and not to those minute circumstances which form the detail of the principal action. In this view, the story of Dido, though it occupies a large portion of the poem, is the most episodical of the whole, being in itself an entire action, and altogether digressive. It is, however, more highly wrought up than any other in the poem. Love by itself, without jealousy or resentment, or other intervening obstacles, is only fitted for pastoral poetry ; but when it is accompanied by other passions,—when it is unfortunate, and is followed by remorse, or despair, or the ruin of states,—it is then raised to an interest which adapts it for the purposes of the tragic or the epic muse. Of the episodes in the concluding books, that of Nisus and Euryalus is the most pathetic. The tender friendship, amiable manners, and unhappy fate of these Trojan heroes, are truly affecting, and make a deep impression on the heart. The grief and lamentations of surviving relatives render this

episode, as well as the stories of Lausus and Pallas, more affecting than even the death of Camilla. In poetic fiction our tears flow from sympathy with the living, more than sorrow for the dead. It is the grief of Lady Randolph, that rends our hearts at the death of Douglas.

Of the *ornaments* of epic poetry, the chief are the *characters, descriptions, sentiments, and style.*

The life and habits of Virgil were not favourable to the graphic delineation of *character*. He was of a retired, contemplative disposition, mingling little in society, and finding more pleasure in the study of inanimate nature, than of the moral world :—

Sin has ne possim naturæ accedere partes,  
Frigidus obstiterit circum præcordia sanguis,  
Flumina amem sylvasque inglorius.—

This disposition, which led him to study the phenomena of nature or to enjoy its beauties, united to the solemnity of his genius, tended, perhaps, in some degree, to detract from his knowledge of human nature, to which the wandering life and varied society of the authors of the Homeric poems, or the minstrels of the middle ages, were far more favourable. Virgil, accordingly, has been, in all ages, reproached with want of variety in his *characters*, and with the tameness of that of his hero. It has been remarked, that the two most interesting characters in the poem are Dido, whom he forsakes, and Turnus, whom he slays; that he is a mere machine in the hands of the gods; that, like Addison's Cato, he is a man of whom the gods take care, and whom we leave to their care with heedless



confidence. The deficiencies of the Roman poet in this department have been also contrasted with the merits of the *Iliad*, where the discrimination of characters is such, that even qualities of the same sort are distinguished in the individuals by whom they are possessed;—the wisdom of Nestor not being the same with that of Ulysses, and the valour of Achilles being different from that of Ajax. But Virgil, in forming that association of sentiments, conduct, and manners, which may be called character, and which particularize an individual of the species, was controlled by his main design of representing Augustus under the character of his hero. Æneas, accordingly, is endued with a sort of pacific valour and Roman generosity. Deliberate courage, and piety to the gods, were the qualities most esteemed among the Romans. Hence Æneas is not a fierce, proud, and unrelenting warrior like Achilles; he is patient, just, and dignified, and his courage is tempered by the sagacity of Nestor, and prudence of Ulysses. Calmness and circumspection are the characteristics of his usual demeanour and conduct. These qualities of the leader support him in his first landing in Africa and Italy; and his character never appears less natural or pleasing than when, in some of the concluding books, he occasionally breaks out into the unreasonable transports of an Ajax or Achilles. His abandonment of Dido has usually been considered as the most objectionable part of his conduct; but the defence is, that he acted in obedience to the commands of Jupiter, communicated to him by Mercury,—“ Naviget; hæc

summa est." The Romans, besides, in the time of Virgil, were little scrupulous in their behaviour, even to those with whom they had formed a legitimate union, and would not bestow severe censure on Æneas, in an age when Augustus divorced his wife Scribonia, merely that he might espouse Livia, whose husband was still alive. It is less, therefore, his actual departure from Carthage which prejudices the reader against him, than the harsh and unfeeling terms in which he expresses himself to the unfortunate queen :—

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Nec conjugis unquam  
Prætendi tædas, aut hæc in fœdera veni.

Except during the ninth book, Æneas is constantly kept in view, and is the principal actor in all the great events of the poem. In the *Iliad*, the absence of the chief hero, during the long period of his wrath, was necessarily supplied by exalting the subsidiary characters. But as Æneas was constantly present, and was intended to be the representative of Augustus, (to whom Mæcenus and Agrippa invariably ascribed the merit of all their measures,) it became a chief object with the poet to depress the subordinate characters, that they might not in any degree obscure the glory of his hero. Hence it may be admitted, that there is a tameness and uniformity in the characters of the Trojan followers of Æneas. But in delineating the other personages he has shown no deficiency in the power of discrimination. In the fourth book, he has deeply engaged our feelings by Dido's high sense of reputation, and of royal dignity, all

borne down by the torrent of one resistless passion. The character of Anchises is admirably supported throughout the brief part which he acts in the poem. He is painted with the natural infirmities of old age; he is ever giving precepts and admonitions; he is represented as skilful in divination, but, from weakness of memory, he mistakes the import of the Delphic oracle. In the second book, the characters of Pyrrhus, son of Achilles, and other Grecian chiefs, are portrayed with great spirit. The gods and goddesses, too, preserve, through the *Æneid*, the features which had been assigned to them in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Juno retains her haughty, choleric, and vindictive temper; which is contrasted with the softness, the art, and the address of Venus.

Homer had already conciliated interest and favour for some of the chiefs in the earlier books of the *Æneid*, whose very names awaken sympathy and delight; and it is, perhaps, a disadvantage in the plan of the Latin poem, that, in the second part of it, we are introduced to so many new characters, for until we have reached the seventh book, we hear nothing of Latinus, Amata, or Turnus. In this respect, the plan of the *Æneid* is inferior to that of the *Iliad*, where we have time to acquire an interest in each person, and where those who awakened our sympathy at the commencement, excite it till the end. But though, in the concluding books of the *Æneid*, we feel the difference between Menelaus and Mezentius, Ulysses and Ufens, we meet with some well-drawn and interesting characters. King Latinus has the



weakness and indecision of Priam, while the dispositions of Evander and Mezentius are finely contrasted. How beautifully has Virgil tempered, in the latter, the horrors of the delineation, by the tyrant's affection for his son, which brings back the mind to those feelings of tenderness, which form the prevailing sentiment of the poem, and awakens almost as much sympathy for the grief of the impious despot, as for the sorrows of the good Evander ! The malice and envy of Drances, the reckless intrepidity of the female warrior Camilla, the softness and modesty of Lavinia, the fury of the exasperated Amata, and the noble simplicity of Evander, are all admirably portrayed. Turnus has ever been a favourite with the reader, and his frankness and rash courage have gained him more partisans than the circumspection and reflective valour of his adversary. An epic poem languishes without a professed rival to the hero ; and the want of such a competitor is severely felt in the warlike part of the *Odyssey*. The epic writer, however, places himself in a trying situation, in thus raising up a character to match his hero. If he lowers him too much, he degrades his hero likewise, who earns no glory in the contest ; if he exalts him too highly, there is a danger that the reader may espouse his part, and become, as it were, the enemy of Him who ought to bear away all the favour and interest. Few poets have steered a due course in a track so hazardous and so narrow, and it may perhaps be admitted, that Virgil hath struck upon a rock, on which Homer had suffered total shipwreck.

The rural habits, and pastoral genius, of Virgil, led him to indulge in *descriptions* of scenery ; and no poet ever painted nature with such delicacy of observation. The landscapes of Italy aided this descriptive talent. Nowhere was the day so bright as in Latium, or the night so serene as in Parthenope. The progress too of painting supplied our poet with new ideas for rural description. Twining, in a dissertation prefixed to his translation of Aristotle's *Poetics*, partly accounts for the acknowledged superiority of Virgil, in touches of this kind, from the progress, which, in his age, had been made in landscape-painting. Even the Greek poets, he maintains, who are the most descriptive, as Theocritus and Homer, are deficient in those picturesque delineations, in which prospects, views, and rural scenery, are considered merely as pictures, and as beautiful objects to the eye. Now, in Pliny's account of Grecian artists, and catalogue of their principal works, no landscape-painter is mentioned, nor anything like a landscape described ; whence it may be inferred, that this department of painting either did not exist, or was very little cultivated, among the Greeks, who, in all their fine arts, seem chiefly to have regarded men and manners. In the times of the Republic, the arts among the Romans were consecrated to augment the magnificence of their city, and proclaim the splendour of their victories. Durable structures, triumphal arches, pictures of combats, and statues of heroes everywhere met the eye of the Roman, which, in those days, would hardly have rested for a moment on the sweet but unpretending delineation

tions of rural scenery. The earliest landscapes which Pliny mentions, are those said to have been painted in *fresco*, in the time of Augustus, by one Ludius, who seems to have been the Claude Lorraine of antiquity: "Divi Augusti ætate, primus instituit amœnissimam parietum picturam, villas, et porticus, ac topiaria opera, lucos, nemora, colles, amnes, littora, qualia quis optârat; varias ibi obambulantium species aut navigantium, terrâque villas adeuntium asellis aut vehiculis: idemque maritimas urbes pingere instituit blandissimo aspectu."<sup>1</sup> Such productions as those of Ludius, present to the poet for his study, in the narrow compass of a single composition, the selected beauties of a vast range of scenery, and what is of more importance, perpetuate those momentary accidents of landscape, by which nature is sometimes embellished, but which quickly elude the gaze of her admirer.

To his descriptions of Italian scenery, Virgil has given not only natural, but local, truth. The scene of the last six books of the *Æneid* lies chiefly in a narrow tract of the coast of Italy, extending from Ostia to Ardea, the ancient capital of the Rutuli; and amid all the changes that must have occurred in two thousand years, modern travellers still recognise some features of the Virgilian landscapes.<sup>2</sup> Even the picture of the little bay and grotto, where the Trojans anchored when driven by a storm from Sicily to the coast of Africa, is said to correspond at this day to the appear-

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Nat. Lib.* XXXV. c. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Bonstetten, *Voyage dans Latium*, p. 117, 207, &c.



ance of a spot in the kingdom of Tunis, a few miles east from Carthage.<sup>1</sup> And when our poet copied Homer in his descriptions, he cautiously rejected all those circumstances which might be called local, retaining only the general beauties of his great master, and thus accommodating them to the features or natural history of the countries in which the scene of his poem is laid. He is also careful to communicate the charm of contrast to most of his descriptions. For example, the placid, retired, and secure harbour which I have just mentioned, and the prospect from the hill, which Æneas ascends in order to ascertain on what coast he has landed, form a beautiful and reposing contrast to the preceding tumult and dreadful images of the storm. Sometimes Virgil has beautifully conjoined his descriptions with sentiment, and with the passions of his principal characters. A few charming instances of this union occur in the eclogues, and a much greater number may be found in the *Æneid*. How strikingly does he exaggerate the distress of Dido, by the picture of the calmness and stillness of night, presented to us in contrast with the heart-rending agonies which deprived the forsaken queen of that repose which was then spread over nature !

Nox erat, et placidum carpebant fessa soporem, &c.

The third book has been particularly devoted to descriptions of scenery ; and there the islands of Greece, with their winding shores and placid harbours—their

<sup>1</sup> Shaw's *Travels*, p. 157.

hills, and rocks, and woods, and ancient temples, all pass before us as in a moving panorama, in which the canvass is always filled up, but never overcharged.

Virgil also excels in his representations of imaginary and allegoric beings. The appearance of Alecto to Turnus, and his personification of the river Tiber, are both evidently executed by the hand of a consummate artist. The monstrous shape of Fame, increasing as she moves—her numerous eyes, and ears, and mouths,—her secret malevolence, and the terror she everywhere diffuses, are strikingly characteristic; and the representation seems to have been the origin of those pictures of Rumour<sup>1</sup> and Slander,<sup>2</sup> which have been so much admired in the plays of Shakspeare. The group of allegoric figures that watch at the portal of Hell is judiciously placed, and the epithets affixed to these dread inhabitants, as *Malesuada Fames*, are pregnant with meaning: but they are rather philosophical than picturesque. They express the baneful influence which the monsters exercise; but they do not bring before us their hideous and ghastly figures.

Few of the *sentiments* in the *Æneid* are announced as general moral precepts: they are carefully rendered applicable to the circumstances of the action, or appropriately assigned to some one as maxims which are naturally called forth by his situation. Thus the line

Scinditur incertum studia in contraria vulgus,

which, taken by itself, has the air of an aphorism, is

<sup>1</sup> *King Henry IV.*

<sup>2</sup> *Cymbeline.*

applied by our poet to the different opinions of the Trojans, with regard to the wooden horse. How appropriate in the mouth of the experienced Nautes is the maxim by which he encourages the desponding Æneas :—

Quicquid erit, superanda omnis fortuna ferendo est ;

and how suitable to the situation of Dido is her declaration to the Trojans :—

Haud ignara mali, miseris succurrere disco.

By this art the moral precepts are disguised under particular applications, and thus never appear to be constrained or dogmatic.

Addison has remarked, that there are two kinds of thoughts, which, in poetry, are carefully to be avoided—the one sort, such as are mean or vulgar—the other, such as are affected and unnatural. As to the first set of thoughts, Virgil has scarcely ever debased the dignity of epic poetry by introducing sentiments that are in any degree coarse or vulgar. All is uniformly majestic: “ Virgil,” says the author of *The Enquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer*, “ had been accustomed to the splendour of a court, the magnificence of a palace, and the grandeur of a royal equipage. Accordingly, his ideas on life and manners are more august and stately than Homer’s. He has a greater regard to those polished manners which render men alike, and make them resemble one another in their conduct and behaviour. The perpetuity of a government, the forms of magistracy, the political



arrangements, and plan of dominion, ideas to which Homer was a stranger, are familiar with the Roman poet." As to the second class of sentiments, those which Addison has styled affected, Virgil seldom departs from what is just and natural. A few of his thoughts, however, remind us of those conceits, trifling points, and puerilities, which are so common among writers at the first rise, and during the decline of literature—

Una salus victis nullam sperare salutem.

There is no poem in any language which at all approaches the excellence of the *style* and versification of the *Æneid*; and no writer ever existed who better knew than Virgil, how to adorn his poetical creations with vestments suited to their transcendent beauty. Our author has invariably held the happy medium between the too severe simplicity of the most ancient Greek poetry, and the luxuriance of the more modern school of Alexandria. "Of all the great poets," says Hume, "*Virgil* and Racine, in my opinion, lie nearest the centre, and are the farthest removed from the extremes of refinement and simplicity in writing." It might also have been added, that the style of Virgil lies nearest the centre between too great brevity and diffuseness. Compression is certainly one of its characteristics; but this is never carried to such an extreme, as to produce harshness or obscurity. With what pregnant and emphatic brevity does our poet indicate, in four words, the destruction of Troy,—"*campus ubi Troja fuit!*" again, how pathetically, and with-

out weakening the previous effect, does he enlarge on the same idea :—

Venit summa dies et ineluctabile tempus  
Dardaniæ : fuimus Troës, fuit Ilium, et ingens  
Gloria Teucrorum : ferus omnia Jupiter Argos  
Transtulit : incensâ Danai dominantur in urbe.  
Quis cladem illius noctis, quis funera fando  
Explicet ? aut possit lacrymis æquare labores ?  
Urbs antiqua ruit multos dominata per annos.

Virgil has been accused, indeed, of indulging too much in that sort of imitative harmony in which the sound becomes an echo to the sense : But in the original formation of every language many descriptive words were intended vocally to imitate and express a meaning. Sounds and noises, in particular, are represented by words purposely framed to denote them, and motions, whether brisk or slow,<sup>1</sup> have a corresponding set of words, in which dactyls or spondees prevail, and which thus render the flow of the verse tardy or rapid. In consequence of this agreement between sense and sound, the echo of the one to the other, whether it is to be considered as a beauty or deformity, is in some degree unavoidable ; or it comes at least naturally, and without exertion on the part of the poet, when an image has full possession of his fancy. There are, however, a few verses in the *Æneid* of this sort, which it must be admitted are too visibly artificial to be pleasing—as the well-known line—

Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum.

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<sup>1</sup> Over some wide watered shore,  
Swinging slow, with sullen roar.

The style of Virgil being thus neither too simple nor ornamental, neither too compressed nor diffuse, being free from all affectation or coarseness, and preserving an uniform majesty and elegance throughout, he is, perhaps, of all poets of antiquity, the most capable of gratifying and improving the powers of taste, and no ancient writer, for propriety and elegance of diction, deserves to be received by those who are desirous of such improvement, with greater confidence—

Ipsū ergo ante omnes animo venerare Maronem, §  
Atque ipsum sequere, utque potes vestigia serva ;  
Huic Musæ favent omnes, hunc poscit Apollo.<sup>1</sup>

And we find, that those modern writers most distinguished for correctness of judgment and purity of taste, whether belonging to the classical or romantic school, have followed closely the footsteps of Maro. The whole of *Telemachus*, though also partly copied from the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, is written in the Virgilian taste; and though I presume no one has executed Cape the Author's plan, of "weaving the whole *Æneid* into a tragedy," yet the French tragic writers have availed themselves of many passages from the *Æneid*, particularly from the fourth book. Dante and Milton, who lay the chief scenes of their poems in hell, have taken many hints from the sixth book: and the former poet acknowledges Virgil as the master on whom he had formed his style—

Tu sei lo mio maestro e'l mio autore ;  
Tu sei solo colui da cui io tolsi  
Lo bello stile che m'ha fatto honore.

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<sup>1</sup> Vida, *Art. Poet. Lib. I.*



The vision of his descendants, exhibited to Æneas in the infernal regions, has suggested those of a similar sort, in the *Faery Queen*,<sup>1</sup> the *Orlando Furioso*,<sup>2</sup> the *Jerusalem Delivered*,<sup>3</sup> the *Lusiad*, and the *Henriade*.<sup>4</sup> The passage in the last mentioned poem, where his posterity are shown in a dream to Henry the Great, contains one of the most happy of the modern imitations of the lamentation for Marcellus. Virgil's celebrated allegoric description of Fame, has been imitated by Voltaire,<sup>5</sup> and others.<sup>6</sup> The shield of Æneas has procured a similar one for almost every succeeding hero of an epic poem. The episode of Nisus and Euryalus has given rise to the expedition of Medoro and Cloridano, in the *Orlando*; and the story of Camilla has suggested that of the female warrior Clorinda, in the *Jerusalem*. Many romantic and pathetic circumstances, however, concerning the

<sup>1</sup> Book III. C. III. 6.

<sup>2</sup> C. III.

<sup>3</sup> C. XVII. st. 66.

<sup>4</sup> *Henriade*, ch. VII.

<sup>5</sup> *Henriade*, ch. VIII.

<sup>6</sup> Mr Laing, in his dissertation on the poems of Ossian, has pointed out, in order to prove that they are not genuine productions, many supposed imitations of the *Æneid* of Virgil. I cannot say, however, that any one of these appears to me very close or striking, except, perhaps, the following in *Fingal*:—"Cuthullin stands alone like a rock in a sandy vale. The sea comes with its waves, and roars on its hardened sides. Its head is covered with foam; the hills are echoing around," (Book III.) which seems to be taken from a well-known simile of Virgil—

Ille, velut pelagi rupes immota, resistit :  
 Ut pelagi rupes, magno veniente fragore,  
 Quæ sese, multis circumlatrantibus undis,  
 Mole tenet; scopuli nequiequam et spumea circum  
 Saxa fremunt, laterique illisa refunditur alga.

early youth and previous exploits of Clorinda, have been added by the Italian poet, which give an interest in her fate still superior to that which is felt for the Volscian queen : Camilla, too, falls by the dart of an unknown and ignoble enemy, but how hath Tasso wrung the heart, by directing the fatal blow from the hand of Clorinda's lover !

Besides the well-known and authentic works of Virgil, that have now been enumerated, several poems still exist, which are very generally ascribed to him, but which, from their inferiority, are supposed to be the productions of his early youth.

Of these the longest is the *Culex*, which has been translated by Spenser, under the title of *Virgil's Gnat*. There can be no doubt, from two epigrams of Martial,<sup>1</sup> that there was a poem called *Culex*, which had been written by Virgil. But it may be questioned if the *Culex*, to which Martial alludes, be the same with the poem under that name which we now possess. The *Culex*, which still appears in some of the editions of Virgil, is not without passages of considerable merit, but it exhibits few marks of the taste and judgment of the Mantuan bard. A compressed and pregnant brevity is one of the chief characteristics of that great poet's genuine works ; but the *Culex*, as

<sup>1</sup> Protinus Italiam concepit, et arma, virumque,  
Qui modo vix Culicem flevrat ore rudi.

Lib. VIII. 56.

Accipe facundi Culicem, studiose, Maronis.

Lib. XIV, ep. 185.

we now have it, is overloaded and diffuse—every thought and description being spun out through as many lines as possible. Those critics who contend for the authenticity of the *Culex*, account for this redundancy by supposing that it was the first, and indeed a boyish, production of its illustrious author. The *Culex*, however, which Virgil wrote, had no claim to such excuse: For Statius mentions, in his *Genethliacon* of Lucan, that the *Pharsalia* of that poet had been completed by him before the age at which Virgil wrote the *Culex*—

Mox cœpta generosior juventa,  
 Albos ossibus Italis Philippos  
 Et Pharsalica bella detonabis. \* \* \* \*  
 Hæc primo juvenis canes sub ævo,  
 Ante annos Culicis Maroniani.

Now, the *Pharsalia* was finished when Lucan was twenty-six; so that, according to Statius, the *Culex* could not have been written till after Virgil had attained that age, and ought consequently to have been as perfect in point of composition as his earliest eclogues. The probability, therefore, is, that the subject was of Virgil's invention, and that some of the verses are truly Virgilian, but that the poem had been lengthened out and interpolated by the transcribers of the middle ages. It was no uncommon practice, among the monks and scholiasts, to choose a topic on which some classic poet was known to have written, as a theme whereon to dilate for the idle exercise of their misplaced ingenuity.

The subject of the *Culex* may be considered as



partly pastoral and partly mock heroic; but the mockery is of a gentle and delicate description, and much real beauty and tenderness break out amid the assumed solemnity. A goatherd leads out his flocks to feed on the pastures near Mount Cithæron. Having fallen asleep, he is suddenly roused from his slumber by the bite of a gnat; and while awakening, he crushes to death the insect which had inflicted the wound. He then perceives a huge serpent approaching, which, if his sleep had not been broken, would inevitably have destroyed him. The shade of the gnat appears to the shepherd on the following night, and reproaches him with having occasioned its death at the moment when it had saved his life. The insect describes all that it had seen in the infernal regions during its wanderings, having as yet obtained no fixed habitation. Next day, the shepherd prepares a tomb, in order to procure repose for the ghost of his benefactor, and celebrates in due form its funeral obsequies.

By far the finest, and probably the most genuine, passage of the poem, is that near the beginning, in which the author describes the goatherd leading out his flocks to their pasture, and in which he descants on the pleasures of a country life. As amended by Heyne, and cleared from the interpolations of the scholiasts, we may find in it the germ of those flowers of song, which afterwards expanded to such maturity and perfection in the *Georgics*—

Igneus ætherias jam Sol penetrârat ad arces,  
Candidaque aurato quatiebat umina curru;

Propulit ut stabulis ad pabula læta capellas  
 Pastor, et excelsi montis juga summa petivit ;  
 Vivida qua patulos velabant gramina colles.  
 Jam sylvis dumisque vagæ, jam vallibus abdunt  
 Corpora, jamque omni nemoris de parte vagantes  
 Scrupea desertæ perrepunt avia rupis :  
 Tondentur tenero viridantia gramina dente,  
 Pendula projectis carpuntur et arbuta ramis.

O bona pastoris, si quis non pauperis usum  
 Mente prius doctâ ruris fastidiat : Illi  
 Si non Assyrio fuerint his lauta colore,  
 Attalicis opibus data, vellera ; si nitor auri  
 Sub laqueare domûs animum non tangit avarum,  
 Picturæque decus ; lapidum nec fulgor ab ullâ  
 Cognitus utilitate movet ; nec pocula Graium  
 Alconis referunt Boëthique toreuma ; nec Indi  
 Conchea bacca maris pretio est : At pectore puro  
 Sæpe super tenero prosternit gramine corpus,  
 Florida cùm tellus gemmantes picta per herbas  
 Vere novat dulci distincta coloribus arva ;  
 Atque illum calamo lætum recinente palustri,  
 Otiaque invidiâ degentem et fraude remota,  
 Pollentemque sui, viridi cum palmite ludens  
 Tmolia pampineo subter coma velat amictu.  
 Illi sunt gravidæ roranti lacte capellæ,  
 Et nemus, et fecunda Pales, et valle sub imâ  
 Semper opaca novis manantia fontibus antra.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The fiery sun had climb'd the ætherial height,  
 And from his golden chariot shook the light ;  
 Forth from their stalls his flocks the shepherd drove,  
 Amid the joyous pastures free to rove,  
 And sought the hills, with living green o'erspread,  
 While wandering round his vagrant she-goats fed ;  
 Through woods, o'er rocks, they range ; and now supine  
 Conceal'd in vales, or hid in brakes recline,  
 With tender tooth on grassy banks they browse,  
 Or crop the arbutus' projecting boughs.

The *Ciris*, a poem of the same doubtful authenticity with the *Culex*, and which some commentators have attributed to Cornelius Gallus, records the well-known mythological fable of Scylla, daughter of Nisus; who, having become enamoured of Minos, the enemy of her father, cut off from her parent's head the fatal lock which preserved his kingdom. In detestation of the act, Minos, on his voyage home from Crete to Megara, fastened her to the side of his vessel, and thus dragged her along through the sea, to the utter amazement of Tethys and the sea-nymphs, who betray much curiosity on the occasion. She is at length relieved by her transformation into the bird

O happy lot of shepherds ! happy he,  
Untaught to scorn their rustic poverty !  
Though not for him hath regal wealth supplied  
The fleece with hues Assyrian double dyed,  
Nor gilded roof, nor painting's graceful lure,  
Hath touch'd his soul, from taint of avarice pure ;  
Nor the vain lustre that the gem displays,  
Which idly casts around its useless blaze ;  
Nor Grecian goblet, graved by Alcon's hand ;  
Nor pearly treasures of the Indian strand :  
Yet oft, with guiltless breast, his limbs he throws,  
Where earth a soft and grassy couch bestows,  
When early spring its varied carpet yields,  
And painted flowers diversify the fields :  
Pleased with his reed, and master of his own,  
To him nor envy nor deceit is known.  
The palm, the vine, their waving branches spread,  
And mingling weave a shelter for his head :  
His are the flocks and milky stores they yield,  
His, too, the honours of the fruitful field ;  
And shady forest, and in valleys low,  
The caves obscure where living fountains flow.



called Ciris, from which the poem derives its title. That part which is introductory to the complaint of Scylla is not very clear in language, or lofty in point of conception. The lamentation itself is as good as might be expected, considering the position in which it was uttered. Some of the lines are palpable imitations of the soliloquy of Ariadne in Catullus. Perhaps the best passage is one in which that poet has also been closely imitated, describing the effects of ungovernable love in the breast of Scylla :—

*Infelix virgo totâ bacchatur in urbe.  
Non Styrace Idæo fragrantès picta capillos,  
Cognita non teneris pedibus Sicyonia servans,  
Non niveo retinens baccata monilia collo.  
Multum illi incerto trepidant vestigia cursu ;  
Sæpe redit patrios adscendere prodita muros,  
Aëriasque facit caussam se visere turres :  
Sæpe etiam tristes volvens in nocte querelas,  
Sedibus ex altis cœli speculatur amorem ;  
Castraque prospectat crebris lucentia flammis.  
Nulla colum novit : carum nec respicit aurum,  
Non arguta sonant tenui psalteria chordâ ;  
Non Libyco molles plauduntur pectine telæ.<sup>1</sup>*

- 
- <sup>1</sup> O'er all the city roams the hapless Fair :  
No Syrian ointments gloss her fragrant hair,  
The wonted sandal is no longer worn,  
And pearls no more her snow-white neck adorn .  
With trembling steps, uncertain where she tends,  
Oft to her father's walls her course she bends ;  
Climbs the high towers, and, as from realms above,  
Pours her sad plaints and nightly dreams of love.  
The gleaming camp alone her eyes behold ;  
Forgot the distaff, and the precious gold ;  
The harp's delightful chords no longer trill ;  
The web is touch'd no more with ivory quill.

From the *Ciris* Spenser, who had translated the *Culex*, imitated a long passage, which constitutes part of the *Legend of Britomart*, in the third book of the *Faery Queen*. The conversations between Britomart and her nurse Glauce, who presses her to reveal the object of her passion, as also the incantations employed by the beldam, correspond closely with the discourse between Scylla and Carme, and the enchantments of the latter.

The *Moretum* would certainly be a curious and interesting production, could it be authenticated as the work of Virgil, or even of Septimius Serenus, to whom Wernsdorff has ascribed it, and who flourished at Rome during the reigns of the Flavian family. Its subject is one concerning which few relics have descended to us from antiquity. It gives an account of the occupations and daily life of an Italian peasant, and so far as it goes, everything is related with the greatest minuteness ; but the employments only of the morning are recorded. The peasant Simulus rises with the dawn. He gathers together the ashes of the yesterday's fire. He then bakes some bread ; and, with the assistance of an African freedwoman named Cybale, he prepares a sort of food called *moretum*, which gives name to the poem, and was chiefly composed of herbs culled from his garden. This introduces a curious description of a peasant's kitchen-garden, and the sort of plants which were reared in it :—

Hortus erat junctus casulæ, quem vimina pauca,  
Et calamo recidiva levi munibat arundo,

Exiguus spatio, variis sed fertilis herbis : ]  
 Non illi deerat, quod pauperis exigit usus.  
 Si quando vacuum casulâ pluviæve tenebant  
 Festave lux, si forte labor cessabat aratro,  
 Horti opus illud erat. Varias deponere plantas  
 Nôrat, et occultæ committere semina terræ,  
 Vicinosque apte curâ submittere rivos.  
 Hîc olus, hîc late fundentes brachia betæ,  
 Fecundusque rumex, malvæque, inulæque virebant ;  
 Hîc siser, et capiti nomen debentia porra ;  
 Hîc etiam nocuum capiti gelidumque papaver,  
 Grataque nobilium requies lactuca ciborum,  
 Et gravis in latum demissa cucurbita ventrem.<sup>1</sup>

The poem concludes with the peasant yoking his oxen, and beginning to plough his field. It is probable,

- <sup>1</sup> Close to the hut a garden lies ; the ground  
 Some ozier twigs and slender reeds surround.  
 Though small in size, its fertile plots produce  
 What herbs are wanted for a poor man's use.  
 If, on a time, a holiday or rain  
 The vacant peasant should at home detain,  
 Or if the plough no longer claimed his toil,  
 His care it was to turn the garden's soil :  
 How various plants were set to him was known,  
 And how the seeds in hidden earth were sown ;  
 Nor less he knew, with well adapted skill,  
 To draw the moisture from the neighbouring rill.  
 Here colewort, and the beet wide-spreading live ;  
 Here plenteous sorrel, mallows, starwort thrive ;  
 Here yellow parsnips ; leeks are also here,  
 Which from their tops derive the name they bear ;  
 Cool poppies, that affect the drowsy head ;  
 Lettuce last served when noble feasts are spread ;  
 And ponderous gourds, which trail along the ground,  
 Spreading their paunch-like pumpkins all around.



however, that what is now extant is only a fragment at the commencement of the *Moretum*, or the first of a series of rustic eclogues, in which the avocations of a peasant were described in succession through the whole day.

The *Copa* merely contains an invitation from an hostess, who was a native of Syria, to pass the hours merrily in a place of entertainment which she kept beyond the gates of Rome: but a good-humoured drinking song by the majestic author of the *Georgics* and *Æneid*, is in itself a curiosity. A few of the lines, though some barbarisms of expression occur, are also written with considerable spirit, and present not an uninteresting picture of the manners that prevailed in those hostels which stood beyond the walls of the city, on the banks of the Tiber, or shore of Ostia. The following is part of the invitation of the hostess;

Sunt cupæ, calices, cyathi, rosa, tibia, chordæ,

Et trichila umbriferis frigida arundinibus;

Est et Mænalio quæ garrit dulce sub antro,

Rustica pastoris fistula more sonans;

Est et vappa, cado nuper diffusa picato.

\* \* \* \*

Est hîc munda Ceres, est Amor, est Bromius,

Sunt et mora cruenta, et lentis uva racemis:

Est pendens junco cæruleus cucumis:

Est tugurî custos armatus falce salignâ;

Sed non et vasto est inguine terribilis.

Huc Alibida veni: fessus jam sudat asellus:

Parce illi; vestrum delictum est asinus.

Nunc cantu crebro rumpunt arbusta cicadæ,

Nunc etiam in gelidâ sepe lacerta latet.

Si sapis, æstivo recubans te prolue vitro ;  
 Seu vis crystallo ferre novos calices.  
 Eja age, pampineâ fessus requiesce sub umbrâ ;  
 Et gravidum roseo necte caput strophio ;  
 Candida formosæ decerpes ora puellæ :  
 Et abeat cui suñt prisca supercilia !  
 Quid cineri ingrato servas bene olentia sertæ ?  
 Anne coronato vis lapidi ista legi ?  
 Pone merum et talos. Pereant, qui crastina curant !  
 Mors aurem vellens—Vivite, ait, venio.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Here are cups, cans, and goblets—the lyre, flute, and rose,  
 And a texture of vines shade and coolness bestows :  
 From a cave sweetly echoes the pipe ; and a flask  
 Has been filled up with wine from a newly broached cask.  
 Here Cupid, fair Ceres, and Bacchus combine ;  
 Here are mulberries red, and the fruit of the vine ;  
 Here, too, from its stalk hangs the cucumber green ;  
 And here though the god of the cottage be seen,  
 His hands but a hook of the willow-tree bear,  
 He has no other weapon to frighten the fair.  
 Hie you hither, Silenus, and give some respite  
 To the ass, which is weary,—the ass, your delight.  
 Now the bushes all burst with the grasshopper's song,  
 And the lizard now lurks the cool thickets among.  
 If you're wise, O refuse not, while here you recline,  
 From the glass or new goblet to drain off the wine.  
 Come, if weary, and rest in the vine's leafy shade,  
 And with chaplets of roses encircle your head.  
 While it blooms, snatch a kiss from the cheek of the fair,  
 And away with all those who look prim and austere !  
 Why reserve you the garland, all sweet with perfume,  
 To deck the cold marble that closes the tomb ?—  
 Set the dice and the wine :—May he perish who care  
 For the good or the ill which to-morrow prepares ;  
 Death pulls by the ear, and cries, " Live while you may !  
 I approach, and perhaps shall be with you to-day."

We here learn what were the usual preparations of a Syrian hostess two thousand years ago on the banks of the Tiber ; and it is said, that, at this day, the bread and the wine, the mulberries, grapes, vine leaves, and chesnuts, are the ordinary luxuries and enjoyments of similar places of entertainment now existing in Italy.

I shall here conclude this long, and, I fear, somewhat tedious account of the life and writings of Virgil ;—writings so universally known, and already so fully illustrated, that I can scarcely hope to have afforded any additional information, or suggested a new idea concerning them. I have been induced, however, to enter into so much detail, not merely because Virgil was the greatest poet of his country, and, by his unwearied assiduity and skilful application of his talents, had placed himself by the side of the first Grecian masters, but because he appears to me the best representative of the Roman, and particularly the Augustan school of poetry ;—the school of polished and accomplished art,—of minute elegance, unwearied industry, skilful combination, and stately dignity.

Contemporary with Virgil, equal to him in celebrity, and little inferior in excellence,

#### HORACE

holds at least the second place in the roll of Latin poets. Lucilius, in his satires, gave very full details concerning the circumstances of his own life ; but his writings have mostly perished, and of all



the works of Roman poets which are now extant, those of Horace present us with the most complete picture of their author's feelings and manners.

He was born in the year 689, at Venusia, or Venusium, (now Venosa,) a town situated on the confines of the ancient Apulia and Lucania—at present the district of Basilicata in Calabria. He was the son of a freedman,<sup>1</sup> who, it appears, had acquired as much wealth as enabled him to purchase a small farm, lying on the banks of the Aufidus,<sup>2</sup> and in the immediate vicinity of Venusium. Here Horace passed his childhood, wandering sometimes to a distance from his paternal home, amid the wild and mountainous scenery of his native region.<sup>3</sup> When he was about ten years of age, his father sold the farm at Venusium, and came to the capital, where he was appointed a collector of imposts. His son was placed under the care of the grammarian Orbilius Pupillus, with whom our young scholar read (though, it would appear, with no great relish) the most ancient poets of his country.<sup>4</sup> He was also instructed in Greek literature;<sup>5</sup> and the writings of Homer, which were perused by him with much greater profit and satisfaction than those of Livius or Ennius, first seem to have awakened in his breast a taste for poetry. On the whole, he received an education far superior to his birth or fortune; and from the manner in which he was dressed, and the number of slaves who attended him, he might have been mistaken for

<sup>1</sup> *Sat. Lib. I. 6.*

<sup>2</sup> *Od. Lib. IV. 9.*

<sup>3</sup> *Od. Lib. III. 4.*

<sup>4</sup> *Epist. Lib. II. 1.*

<sup>5</sup> *Epist. Lib. II. 2.*

the rich heir of a long line of opulent ancestors. His father, besides sparing no expense on the full cultivation of his talents, himself assiduously attended to the tuition of his son—watching the progress of his instruction, and guarding his morals from the contagion of a dissolute capital.<sup>1</sup> The benefit which his character derived, in future life, from this paternal care and protection, is beautifully acknowledged by him with the strongest expressions of gratitude—

Si neque avaritiam, neque sordes, nec mala lustra  
 Objiciat vere quisquam mihi : purus, et insons  
 (Ut me collaudem) si vivo, et carus amicis,  
 Causa fuit pater his——<sup>2</sup>

He represents it as a masterpiece of art in his father, that, when warning him against the vices into which he thought he was most likely to fall, instead of wounding his self-love by pointing to the defects in his own disposition, he called his attention to the faults which were prominent in the characters of others.<sup>3</sup> Those who love to trace the direction which education gives to talents, and its effects on the habits of after life, may perhaps discover, in this sort of tuition, the germ or origin of the Satires and Epistles of Horace.

After he had assumed the *toga virilis*, Horace completed his course of instruction by a residence at Athens,<sup>4</sup> where he studied philosophy, along with the son of Cicero, Varus, and the young Messala. He was there at the time of the assassination of Cæsar ;

<sup>1</sup> *Sat. Lib. I. 6.*

<sup>2</sup> *Sat. Lib. I. 6.*

<sup>3</sup> *Sat. Lib. I.—Sat. 4.*

<sup>4</sup> *Epist. Lib. II. 2.*

and the conspirators, Brutus and Cassius, having shortly afterwards arrived in Greece, Horace, with most of the other young Romans who were then studying at Athens, joined the republican party; and the camp of Brutus became thronged with the heirs of those illustrious patricians who had formerly rallied around the standard of Pompey. Horace continued nearly two years under the command of Brutus, and followed him to Macedonia, where he attained the rank of a military tribune.<sup>1</sup> He was present at the fatal battle of Philippi, and much has been said of the cowardice he exhibited in that combat. Our poet himself acknowledges, in an ode imitated from Archilochus, that he threw away his shield, and fled with precipitation;<sup>2</sup> but there seems no reason to suppose that he saved himself earlier than others, or that he left the field of battle till all hope of victory had vanished. The shield, perhaps, might not have been so dear to him, or sacred, as it was to Epaminondas; yet surely, in the days of Augustus, the spirit of military honour was not so completely extinguished at Rome, that he would have acknowledged his rapid flight, had it not been understood that it was inevitable, and had been shared by his companions.

It is not known what route Horace took after the battle of Philippi. He escaped with precipitation, and had the good fortune not to be discovered by the pursuing parties of the enemy. It does not appear that he repaired to Sicily, which, under Sextus Pompey, was then the chief refuge of those who still resolved

<sup>1</sup> *Sat. Lib. I. 6.*

<sup>2</sup> *Od. Lib. II. 7.*



to adhere to the republican cause.<sup>1</sup> It is more probable, that he lurked in Greece, till an amnesty was proclaimed to all who should surrender; and that, having availed himself of this opportunity to quit the republican party and a military life, he at length returned to Italy. His father had died during his absence, and it is likely that his small patrimony had been ruined or confiscated in the course of those civil dissensions, in which he had engaged on the vanquished side. His chief resource lay in the generosity of his friends, whose favour he tried to conciliate by his wit, and a few little poems which he now occasionally produced.<sup>2</sup> About this time, he composed the odes which at present form the tenth and twenty-eighth of the first book, and the seventh of the first book of satires. At length, in the year 716, when he had reached the age of twenty-seven, he was recommended to the notice of Mæcenas, first by Virgil, and subsequently by Varus. He was shortly afterwards presented in due form to this distinguished patron of literature; but he felt so overawed, that he spoke little and with much hesitation. Though this introduction laid the foundation of his future fame and fortune, Mæcenas paid him no great attention at the first interview. To the poet's candid statement of his situation and circumstances, he made but a brief answer, and dismissed him after a short and unsatisfactory conversation.<sup>3</sup> He took no farther notice of him for the space of nine months, and Horace did not stoop

<sup>1</sup> Velleius Paterculus, Lib. II. c. 72.

<sup>2</sup> *Epist.* Lib. II. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Sat.* Lib. I. 6.

to any servility or flattery, during the interval, to obtain his patronage. At the end of this period, Mæcenas at length sent for him, and soon admitted him among the number of his domestic friends.<sup>1</sup> From this time, Mæcenas was somewhat more to Horace than a mere patron, or even acquaintance; and it appears, both from the odes<sup>2</sup> and satires, that, notwithstanding the difference in rank and situation, a tender friendship subsisted between them. Virgil and Propertius were learned and skilful poets; but Horace was also a man of the world, of delightful conversation and accommodating temper, and a fit companion for patricians or statesmen. He now attended his friend and patron in most of his expeditions, whether of business or pleasure, enlivening the journey by the agreeable conversation in which Mæcenas engaged him on the most ordinary and familiar topics. Our poet followed the minister to Brundisium, when he proceeded there with Cocceius Nerva and Capito,<sup>3</sup> in order to bring about a reconciliation between Antony and

<sup>1</sup> *Sat.* Lib. I. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Cur me querelis exanimas tuis? &c.*

<sup>3</sup> Much chronological difficulty exists with regard to this expedition, in which Horace accompanied Mæcenas to Brundisium. There is no doubt that Mæcenas went to that town, with Capito and Cocceius Nerva, in order to negotiate a treaty between his master and Antony, in the year 714. But Horace could not have been so early admitted to familiarity with Mæcenas, or even have been introduced to his notice; since Virgil, who first presented Horace to his patron, had not in that year himself obtained the favour or protection of the minister. Mæcenas, however, went in 717 to Tarentum, in order to conclude a negotiation with Antony, and it is possible he may have visited Brundisium on the way. But then Horace mentions, that Cocceius and Capito were of the

Octavius ; and some of the ludicrous circumstances of that journey subsequently furnished him with the subject of one of his most celebrated satires. He also embarked with Mæcnas in a fleet which he commanded during the naval war against Sextus Pompey ; and some of the vessels having been wrecked, he was nearly drowned in the Gulf of Velia, close to the promontory of Palinurus. Notwithstanding this disaster, Horace expressed his readiness again to sail with Mæcnas on board of one of the galleys with which he was intrusted, in the great maritime contest that terminated with the battle of Actium.<sup>1</sup> But Mæcnas would not permit him ; knowing, probably, that he would be of no great service to the cause, or fearing lest the fatigues of the voyage and the war might impair his delicate health.

Horace was better rewarded for his fidelity, and the dangers he encountered for the sake of a patron, than his predecessors, Lucretius and Catullus, or his contemporary Tibullus. Mæcnas bestowed on him a villa at Tibur, and obtained for him a grant of land in the eastern extremity of the Sabine territory. He also procured for him the favour of Augustus, who offered him the situation of one of his private secretaries.<sup>2</sup> This office would have removed him from the table of Mæcnas, which he usually frequented, to that of the emperor himself. The offer was declined,

party ; and we are assured from history, that they accompanied Mæcnas to Brundisium in 714, though we do not know that they went with him to Tarentum in 717.

<sup>1</sup> *Epod.* 1.

<sup>2</sup> Sueton. *Vit. Horat.*



on the plea of bad health; but, so far was the refusal from offending Augustus, that he continued to treat him with the utmost distinction and familiarity. He encouraged him to write additional odes, to collect those which he had already composed, and to address one of his epistles to himself; and when the emperor at length received the present of his book, he returned a jocular answer, comparing the size of the little volume to the short and rounded figure of the poet.<sup>1</sup>

With Augustus himself for his protector—with Mæcenas, Tibullus, and Virgil, for his friends—enlivened by the smiles of Lalage—blessed with a tranquil mind, and a competence with which he was satisfied—engaged in the composition of works which obtained for him the high esteem of his contemporaries, and which he foresaw would ensure him immortality, he attained, perhaps, the greatest felicity which an Epicurean life could afford. The manner in which he usually spent his time may be learned from his works—he passed it, while at Rome, in the most delectable lounging, and when he retired to the country, in the most delightful rural occupations.

His residence in the capital was on the Esquiline hill, which, though once unwholesome, was considered in the time of Augustus as the most healthy and agreeable situation in ancient Rome,<sup>2</sup> being remarkable for the purity of its air, and commanding a view of the Campagna, as far as the heights of Tivoli. The furniture of the house was plain, but neat and clean,

<sup>1</sup> Sueton. *Vit. Horat.*

<sup>2</sup> *Sat. Lib. I. 8.*

and a blazing fire ever shone on the hearth.<sup>1</sup> Here Horace dwelt during spring, and also during the winter, unless when its severity forced him to seek warmth and shelter for a few weeks in some of the southern seaports of Italy, as Baiæ, Velia, or Tarentum.<sup>2</sup> While residing at Rome, he did not rise till ten o'clock of the forenoon, though he frequently composed and wrote before he got up. He continued to read or write for some time after he had quitted his couch. He was then anointed with oil, as a preparation for walking, for the severer exercise of a game resembling tennis, and for the sports of the Campus-Martius. When tired with these amusements, or when the day became too hot to continue them, he bathed, and partook of a frugal repast.<sup>3</sup> During the afternoon, he strolled along the streets, or lounged in the Forum, inquiring the price of vegetables or bread, and sometimes listening to the stories and divinations of fortune-tellers, or astrologers, who frequently assembled in crowds at the Circus. He then went home to a supper, which usually consisted of leeks, pulse, and pancakes. Three pages attended him, and a goblet with two cups, placed on a marble tablet, stood by his side. Having washed after supper, he retired to rest, satisfied with his lot during the day that had passed, and little solicitous concerning the morrow.<sup>4</sup> When he had guests with him, our poet appears to have been little less abstemious. Herbs were the chief part of the meal, the wine was not of the first quality, and

<sup>1</sup> *Epist.* I. 5. <sup>2</sup> *Epist.* I. 7 and 15. <sup>3</sup> *Sat. Lib.* I. 6. <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

he did not refuse any vintage of a finer flavour than his own, which might be brought for the occasion by a guest.<sup>1</sup> It is probable, however, that he supped abroad oftner than he entertained his friends at home, and that his evenings were frequently spent at feasts, given by Messala or Mæcenas. Simple as his fare may have been at his own house, it would appear, that he did not abstain from the more rich and costly viands, presented to him at the tables of his patrons, and he was sometimes even guilty of the enormity of rendering himself sick, by partaking too freely of the high-seasoned dishes, served up at these savoury banquets.<sup>2</sup> The society he frequented at Rome, was various; he sometimes associated at home with buffoons or parasites, and passed from their company to the table of Mæcenas.<sup>3</sup>

Horace found that a continual residence at Rome, was unfavourable to poetical inspiration, and to that unvaried tranquillity of mind, in which he placed his supreme felicity. The noise and tumult of the streets drove every poetical thought from his head; and he was alternately teased by poets, who wished him to listen to their bad verses, and by politicians, who attempted to wring from him state secrets, of which they supposed he might be possessed, in consequence of his intimacy with Mæcenas.<sup>4</sup>

When summer therefore approached, he joyfully quitted Rome, and retired to the town of Præneste,<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Epist.* Lib. I. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Epod.* 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Sat.* Lib. II,

<sup>4</sup> *Epist.* Lib. II. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Dum tu declamas foro, Præneste relegi,—*Epist.* I. 2



to his villa at Tibur, or his Sabine farm ;<sup>1</sup> and he was in very bad humour when his plans for change of residence were in any way deranged. Præneste, (now Palestrina,) which lay about twenty miles east from Rome, was much frequented by Horace. The air was considered as the finest in Italy : it was particularly fresh and cool in summer : and the lofty citadel which stood on a hill overhanging the town commanded one of the most magnificent prospects in the Roman empire.

There can be no doubt that Horace resided much at Tibur, but it has been questioned if he had a villa there belonging to himself, or if he only visited at the villas of his friends. The manner in which he expresses himself in his odes, convinces me that the house he inhabited near Tibur, was his own property, or at least that he had there a spot which he was entitled to consider as a home. He declares, that he prefers Tibur to every place in the world. Fatigued with the tumult of Rome, he sighs for its tranquillity, and hopes that it may be the retirement of his old age. He was never so happily inspired as under the shade of the grove of Tiburnus, or beside the cascades of the resounding Albunea. Nor is it likely that a person of the independent character of Horace would have lived so long under the roof of a stranger, or so

<sup>1</sup> Vester, Camœnæ, vester in arduos

Tollor Sabinos ; seu mihi frigidum

Præneste, seu Tibur supinum,

Seu liquidæ placuere Baiæ.

Lib. III. od. 4.

loved a spot which he could not call his own. The authority too of Suetonius is express in favour of the Tiburtine villa: “*Vixit plurimum in secessu ruris sui Sabini aut Tiburtini; domusque ejus ostenditur circa Tiburni luculum.*”<sup>1</sup> The most formidable objection to the existence of a Tiburtine villa, is the expression in one of the odes of Horace himself—“*Satis beatus unicis Sabinis;*” from which it has been inferred, that the Sabine farm was his only possession. But, in the first place, it is not known at what time this ode was written; and the Tiburtine villa may have been acquired after the date of its composition. Secondly, in that ode Horace is speaking of pecuniary emolument, and the Sabine farm may have been the sole property he possessed which yielded any revenue; and lastly, the word *unicis* may imply, not that it was his only property, but that the farm was *unique* and excellent beyond all others. The site, therefore, of the Tiburtine villa, may be still viewed by the traveller, with all the interest which the recollection of Horace inspires.

The ancient Tibur (now Tivoli) was considered by the Romans as one of their most delightful retreats. It lay about sixteen miles eastward from Rome, and was situated on an eminence which rose on the skirts of the Apennines. The climate was the most salubrious in Italy.<sup>2</sup> Its soil supplied in abundance all

<sup>1</sup> *Horat. Vit.*

<sup>2</sup> Statius, in his poem on the Tiburtine Villa of Vopiscus, has left us a beautiful picture of the woods, and rocks, and streams of Tibur—its amenity, freshness, and repose.

the luxuries of life, and the scenery was that of Switzerland, lighted up by a southern sun. "The hill of Tivoli," says Forsyth, "is all over picture. The town, the villas, the ruins, the rocks, the cascades, in the foreground; the Sabine hills, the three Monticelli, Soracte, Frescati, the Campagna, and Rome, in the distance: these form a succession of landscapes superior, in the delight produced, to the richest cabinet of Claudes. Tivoli cannot be described: no true portrait of it exists—all views alter it, and are poetical translations of the matchless original."<sup>1</sup> But the chief pride and ornament of Tībur were the windings and falls of the Anio, (now Teverone,) which runs close to the town, and renders it cool and moist. This river, having meandered from its source amid the vales of Sabina, glides gently through Tivoli, till, coming to the brink of a rock, it precipitates itself in one mass down the steep, and then, boiling for an instant in its narrow channel, rushes headlong through a chasm in the rock into the caverns below. One of these caves is called the Grotto of Neptune. The other, lower down, is termed the Siren's Grotto, into which the torrent pours with tremendous impetuosity, and a deafening noise.<sup>2</sup> A beautiful temple crowns the rock which hangs over these caverns. It is commonly supposed to have been dedicated to the Tiburtine sibyl called Alburnia, and from its vicinity to the waterfalls,

<sup>1</sup> *Remarks during an Excursion in Italy*, p. 275.

<sup>2</sup> Eustace, *Classical Tour*, Vol. II. c. 7.



has been styled by Horace, “*Domus Albunæ resonantis.*”<sup>1</sup>

The town of Tibur lies on the left bank of the Anio, and on the opposite side from that where the remains of the Horatian villa are yet shown to strangers. After crossing the river and descending along the banks for a short distance, the traveller approaches the

“*Rura, nemusque sacrum, dilectaque jugera Musis.*”<sup>2</sup>

The path, as he advances, becomes shaded with olives, and oaks, and laurels, and vines, the shoots, perhaps, of those trees which formed the “*Tiburni Lucus.*” Emerging from this grove, he reaches the little convent of St Antony, built on the site and ruins of the villa of Horace. It probably had not been an extensive domain, as the house stood on the narrow ridge of a hillock. It was situated at a bend of the river, and commanded a full view of the waterfalls. A garden or orchard of a few acres (“*uda mobilibus pomaria rivis*”) was laid out in terraces between the villa and river.<sup>3</sup> The magnificent and vast domains of the poet’s friend, Quintilius Varus, which adjoined

<sup>1</sup> Some travellers, but, I think, erroneously, suppose that the “*Domus Albunæ resonantis*” was in the neighbourhood of the *Aque Albule*—sulphureous lakes, or now rather pools, close to the *Via Tiburtina*, leading from Rome to Tibur;—(Forsyth’s *Remarks on Italy*, p. 270;) and it is said that in consequence of the hollow ground in the vicinity returning an echo to footsteps, the spot obtained from Horace the epithet of “*resonantis.*”—Spence’s *Polymetis*.

• Martial, Lib. I. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Castellan, *Lettres sur l’Italie*, T. II. p. 120.

his own, embellished the scenery to the west. The villa was protected by the Sabine hills from the northern blast, while on the opposite side of the river rose the town of Tibur, and the palace of Mæcenas. "If Horace," says Eustace, "who so often and so fondly celebrates the charms of his villa at Tibur, were to revive, he would still find the grove, the irriguous garden, the ever varying rill, the genial soil, in short, all the well-known features of his beloved retreat, where, defended by a semicircular range of wooded mountains from every cold blustering wind, he might look down on the playful windings of the Anio below, discover numerous rills gleaming through the thickets as they glided down the opposite bank—enjoy a full view of the splendid mansion of his friend Mæcenas, rising directly before him, and catch a distant perspective of 'Aurea Roma,' and the golden towers of the capitol soaring majestic on its distant mount."<sup>1</sup>

I have mentioned, that doubts are entertained by some writers, whether Horace possessed any villa at Tibur; but there can be no question that he had a farm in the valley which was called Ustica from a mountain of that name. This "*ridens angulus*," which possessed sufficient attractions sometimes to draw Horace from the luxuries of Rome, and the splendid villas of Tibur, was situated about twelve miles northeast from that town, among the Sabine hills, and at the eastern extremity of the ancient Sabine territory. The road to it was by the Valerian way, which was a

<sup>1</sup> Vol. II. c. 7.

continuation of the Tiburtine; and by this route Horace must have travelled when proceeding from Tibur to his Sabine farm. On first leaving Tibur, the Via Valeria is skirted by the beautiful Monte Catillo on the left; and it has the Anio on the right, the whole way to the town of Varia (now Vico-Varo) mentioned by Horace, as the chief neighbouring municipality, where representatives from the contiguous villages were accustomed to assemble—

Quinque bonos solitum Variam demittere patres.

From Varia the road proceeds about two miles along the bold and picturesque banks of the Anio. The path that leads to Horace's villa turns to the left of the Valerian way, and leaving on the right the chill village of Mandela, ("rugosus frigore pagus,") it enters the delicious valley of Ustica, which gave a name to Horace's house and lands. This dale is bounded by the most beautiful hills, and watered by the Digentia, the favourite stream of Horace—

Me quoties reficit gelidus Digentia rivus, &c.

The road passes the Fanum Vacunæ,<sup>1</sup> (now Rocca Giovane,) whence the poet dated one of his philosophical Epistles, and runs along the foot of Mons Lucretilis, which sheltered the valley to the west and south. Arcadia itself could scarcely have exhibited more beautiful scenes, or opened more delightful recesses than this mountain unfolded; so that Lucretilis, without being indebted to poetical exaggeration, might

<sup>1</sup> See Pliny, *Hist. Nat. Lib.* III. 12.



easily be supposed to have attracted the attention of the rural divinities, and allured them to its delicious wilderness.<sup>1</sup>

“About a mile and a half beyond Rocca Giovane,” says Eustace, “we turned up a pathway, and, crossing a vineyard, found ourselves on the spot where Horace’s villa is supposed to have stood. It was built of a beautiful white stone from Tibur.<sup>2</sup> But a part of a wall rising in the middle of brambles, some mosaic pavements, and the fragments of a column, are the only traces which now remain of the poet’s mansion. It probably was neither remarkable for its size nor decorations—neatness and convenience it must have possessed. Its situation is extremely beautiful: placed in a little plain, or valley, in the windings of Mount Lucretilis, it is sheltered on the north side by hills rising gradually, but boldly, while, towards the south, a long hillock covered with a grove, protects it from the scorching blasts of that quarter. Being open to the east and west, it gives a full view of Rocca Giovane, formerly Fanum Vacunæ, on one side; on the other, two towns, the nearest of which is Digentia, the farthest Civitella, perched each on the pointed summit of a hill, present themselves to view; below, and forming a sort of basis to these eminences, Ustica, speckled and spangled with little shining rocks, stretches its recumbent form.

<sup>1</sup> Velox amœnum sæpe Lucretilem  
Mutat Lycæo Faunus.—

Lib. I. od. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Harles, *Hist. Litter. Roman.*

“ Behind the house, a path leading through a grove of olives and rows of vines, conducts to an abundant rill, descending from Fonte bello, (perhaps anciently Bandusia,<sup>1</sup>) a fountain in the highest regions of the mountain. It is collected in its fall from an artificial cascade into a sort of basin, whence it escapes, pours down the hill, and glides through the valley under the name of Digentia, now Licenza. This rill, if I may judge by its freshness, still possesses the good qualities which Horace ascribed to it.

<sup>1</sup> Chaupy (*Decouverte de la Maison d'Horace*) and Hobhouse (*Illustrations of Childe Harold*) place the fountain of Bandusia on the borders of the Lucanian and Apulian districts, about six miles from Venusia, where Horace was born. This opinion is founded on a bull of Pope Paschal II. dated in 1103, and addressed to the Abbot “ Monasterii Bantini, in Apuliâ Achiruntin.” In this document, Bandusia is certainly mentioned as lying in that quarter: “ Confirmamus siquidem vobis cænobium ipsum, et omnia quæ ad illud pertinent, monasterias, sive cellas, cum suis pertinentiis; videlicet, ecclesiam S. Salvatoris cum aliis ecclesiis de Castello Bandusii;” and, in the enumeration of the churches which follows, the bull specifies, “ Ecclesiam Sanctorum Martyrum Gervasii et Protasii, in Bandusino Fonte, apud Venusiam.” It is thus clear, that there was a fountain styled Bandusia, in the vicinity of Venusia, the birth-place of Horace. But Horace's father sold the farm which he possessed in its neighbourhood, and the poet himself never resided in that district, except in childhood. Now, it is evident, from his ode addressed to the “ Fons Bandusiæ,” that it lay in the immediate vicinity of his rustic abode among the Sabine Hills; he talks of it as cooling, and refreshing his flocks and cattle, and announces his intention of sacrificing a kid on the following day, to the genius of that crystal fount. The probability is, that Horace had named the clearest and loveliest stream of his Sabine retreat, after that fountain of Bandusia, which lay in Apulia, and on the brink of which he had no doubt often sported in infancy.

“I must indeed here observe, that the whole tract of country which we have just traversed, corresponds in every particular with the description which Horace gave of it two thousand years ago. Not only the grand and characteristic features, the continued chain of mountains, the shady valley, the winding dell, the abundant fountain, the savage rocks, features which a general convulsion of nature only can totally efface; not these alone remain, but the less and more perishable beauties, the little rills, the moss-lined stones, the fragrant groves, the arbutus, half concealed in the thicket, the oak and the ilex suspended over the grotto. These meet the traveller at every turn, and rise around him as so many monuments of the judgment and accuracy of the poet, who alludes to all of these beauties in some part of his works, and to many of them in the delightful description which he gives of his farm to Quintius—

Continui montes, nisi dissocientur opacâ  
 Valle: sed ut veniens dextrum latus aspiciat Sol,  
 Lævum discedens curru fugiente vaporet.  
 Temperiem laudes, quid si rubicunda benignè  
 Corna vepres et pruna ferant? si quercus et ilex  
 Multâ fruge pecus, multâ dominum juvet umbrâ?  
 Dicas adductum propius frondere Tarentum.  
 Fons etiam rivo darenomen idoneus, ut nec  
 Frigidior Thracam, nec purior ambiat Hebrus.”

At this farm Horace had both vineyards and plantations of olives;<sup>1</sup> but herbs and pulse<sup>2</sup> seem to have

<sup>1</sup> *Epist.* Lib. I. 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Epist.* Lib. I. 14.



been its chief produce. It also maintained considerable flocks of goats, which browsed on the arbutus and thyme, with which the neighbouring forests abounded.<sup>1</sup> Horace had on the farm a *villicus*, or grieve, with eight slaves; and five families resided on it.<sup>2</sup> He had here a stock of wine, thirteen or fourteen years old, and much superior to what he drank at Rome.<sup>3</sup> Here, too, he possessed a library of well-selected books, consisting chiefly of the works of the Greek philosophers and comic poets.<sup>4</sup> In this retirement he composed many of his satires;<sup>5</sup> he frequently employed himself in the labours of agriculture, or offered sacrifices to the rural divinities. At leisure hours he slumbered on the grassy banks of a stream,<sup>6</sup> sauntered in the woods, or mused amid the ruins of a mouldering temple, while all the neighbouring rocks and valleys resounded to the harmonious pipe of the shepherd.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Od.* Lib. I. 17.<sup>2</sup> *Epist.* Lib. I. 14.<sup>3</sup> *Od.* Lib. III. 8.<sup>4</sup> *Sat.* Lib. II. 3.<sup>5</sup> *Sat.* Lib. II. 6.<sup>6</sup> *Epist.* Lib. I. 14.<sup>7</sup> *Od.* Lib. I. 17.

Though now, the naked scene around,  
 The signs of bigot power be spread;  
 No trace of former grandeur found,  
 No classic villa rears its head;  
 And thine hath met the vulgar lot,  
 With scarce a stone to mark its spot;  
 Yet fancy, to the ardent view,  
 Can raise the modest pile anew,  
 And point where Pan, thy favoured flocks to keep,  
 Left at thy potent call his loved Lycæan steep.  
 There gold or ivory, richly wrought,  
 Luxurious eyes might seek in vain;

In the afternoon and evenings he sometimes hospitably entertained his rustic neighbours, listening to their facetious stories, and discoursing with each rustic Ofellus, not on the idle topics which engaged the conversations of the Capital, but on the nature and laws of friendship, the supreme good, and the best means of attaining true felicity. His own example and experience aided the solution of such questions in the philosophy of human life; and the unaffected contentment and tranquillity of mind, which he enjoyed at his Sabine farm, have afforded a practical lesson of wisdom, not only to the friends by whom he was surrounded, but to all posterity—

Me quoties reficit gelidus Digentia rivus,  
 Quem Mandela bibit, rugosus frigore pagus;  
 Quid sentire putas? quid credis, amice, precari?  
 Sit mihi, quod nunc est etiam minus, ut mihi vivam  
 Quod superest ævi, si quid superesse volunt Di:  
 Sit bona librorum, et provisæ frugis in annum  
 Copia; ne fluitem dubiæ spe pendulus horæ.  
 Hæc satis est orare Jovem, qui donat et aufert;  
 Det vitam, det opes: æquum mî animum ipse parabo.<sup>1</sup>

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No beams, from farthest Afric brought,  
 Hymettian columns there sustain;  
 Nor Chian wines, nor Persian nard,  
 Could tempt the philosophic bard:  
 Calm leisure, books, and balmy rest,  
 Were the rich treasures there possessed.  
 And sweet oblivion of corroding care,  
 Evenings of genuine joy, and feasts of gods, were there.

*Poetical Tour.*

<sup>1</sup> *Epist. Lib. I. ep. 18.*

In this happy frame of mind, Horace lived till November 746, when he expired suddenly at Rome. He was unable, in his last moments, to put his hand to his testament, but he nominated Augustus as his heir. His life terminated about the same time with that of Mæcenas, though it seems uncertain whether he survived or predeceased his friend. He died at the age of fifty-seven, and his remains were deposited near the tomb of Mæcenas, on the Esquiline Hill.

The intellectual and moral character of Horace may be gathered from his writings, as accurately as the mode in which he passed his time. His mind was enlightened by study, and invigorated by observation. It was comprehensive, but not visionary—delicate, but not fastidious—too sagacious to be warped by prejudice—too reflective to be influenced by resentment. To infer the moral dispositions of a poet from the tone of sentiment which pervades his work, may be often a fallacious analogy; but the soul of Horace speaks so unequivocally through his odes and epistles, that we may safely consult them as the faithful mirrors of his heart. His moral qualities, perhaps, may not be so highly estimated as his intellectual endowments; but he was of a cheerful temper, and of great moderation, equanimity, and independence of mind. In early youth, when he first came to the capital, after the battle of Philippi, he was somewhat of a coxcomb, both in his dress and manners,<sup>1</sup> and much addicted to the promiscuous gal-

<sup>1</sup> *Epist.* Lib. I. ep. 14.



lantry which then prevailed. The advance of time scarcely saved him from the power of love;<sup>1</sup> and, at the age of fifty, he felt the full force of a passion which he believed had been conquered. According to the principles of that sect to which he belonged, he adopted as a rule of conduct, that he should permit nothing to ruffle his temper. His heart was devoted to an indolence, which often arises from the conviction, that happiness is not to be found in wealth, or power, or dignity. He was grateful to his benefactors, and warmly attached to his friends; but he wrapped himself up in Epicurean indifference to the crimes, and follies, and projects, of the rest of mankind. Of these, however, though little affected by them, he was a constant and acute observer; and his accurate lively delineations of every species of human error and absurdity, form the most valuable, as well as the most characteristic portion of his agreeable compositions.

The works of Horace comprehended, 1st, Odes; 2d, Epodes; 3d, Satires; and 4th, Epistles.

I. In the early ages of Greece, the lyric muse, perhaps the eldest of her sisters, was destined to sing the praises of gods at their festivals, or celebrate at public games the actions of heroes. While thus employed in adding fervency to religion or patriotism, it is probable, that nothing would enter into

<sup>1</sup> Lib. IV. od. 1.

the composition of lyrical poetry that was not moral and sublime. But though chastity and grandeur were the original attributes of its Muse, she soon descended from her primeval stateliness, and mixing with a people addicted to every species of pleasure and gratification, she stooped to light descriptions of the enjoyments of love, banquets, dances, and wine.<sup>1</sup>

Yet this vicissitude, though it diminished the native dignity of lyric verse, produced all that pleasing variety to which no other poetry can pretend. The versification naturally was adapted to the theme which was sung. Each new subject was agreeably supported by a change of numbers, and hence arose that free unbounded spirit which forms the peculiar charm of lyric composition.

A great choice of subjects thus lay open for the imitation of the Romans, when they first became familiar with the language and poetry of Greece. But while the dramatic and epic productions of that country were early translated into the Latin language, national circumstances and manners were by no means favourable in Italy to the cultivation of lyric poetry. The early communication of the Romans had been chiefly with the cold and rugged Sabines. The imagination of the Greeks, on the other hand, had been vivified by intercourse with the Oriental nations; and

<sup>1</sup> Queen of the lyre! in thy retreat,  
The fairest flowers of Pindus glow,  
The vine aspires to crown thy seat,  
And myrtles round thy laurel grow.

Akenside, *Ode* 13.

they had been accustomed, from their remotest periods, to all the pomp of Persia, and the dread solemnity of Egypt. Nor were there in Italy any of those high and solemn festivals in honour of the gods—those august assemblies of confederated states, which gave such imposing dignity to the Pythian games, at which an almost celestial music animated the bard, “laureâ donandus Apollinari.” While the lyric muse was thus restrained from her highest efforts, the rigid republicans did not bend so readily at the shrine of Venus and the Graces as the natives of Teos or Lesbos. Their sensibility was less profound than that of the Greeks; they had less enthusiasm, and also less gaiety; their passions were less ardent, and their fires of genius less scorching. In Greece, the kindred art of music was long associated with verse; and from lyric verse it was so inseparable, that the poet sung his own compositions to the lyre. The inferiority, too, of the Roman music to that of the Greeks, precluded those changes of strophe, antistrophe, and epode, which give such animation and discursive variety to the lyric portion of the Athenian tragedies and the odes of Pindar. This species of poetry, likewise, suffers more than any other, by transmutation into another language from that in which it was originally composed. However coolly it may actually have been written, it must always bear reference to that excited state of mind in which it is supposed to have been originally poured forth. We ever associate with it the notion of something enthusiastic and extemporaneous, and the idea of imitation is as injurious to its full effect, as a



suspicion of premeditation to the charms of oratory.<sup>1</sup> So long, therefore, as the literature of Rome was in its infancy, and its poets were only a race of translators, they had the good sense to perceive, that lyric poetry was the department in which, of all others, their imitative talents could be least successfully exerted.

From these causes, it was little cultivated during the early ages of the republic, either in the form of original composition or of Greek imitation. We hear, indeed, of some barbarous verses chanted by the Salian priests, and poems recited at feasts by ingenuous youths, in praise of the heroes of their country. We are altogether ignorant, however, of the merit and extent, or even the precise nature, of these compositions; and it may be safely announced, that they never constituted a body of lyric poetry, in any degree resembling that which had been formed by Alcman, Stesichorus, and Tyrtæus, during a corresponding period in the history of Greece. Catullus, indeed, at the very close of the republic, translated a single ode from Sappho; but the other pieces, which have obtained for him a rank among this class of poets, are rather iambic than lyrical. At length, in the Augustan age, Horace, with a genius improved by the early study and constant perusal of the Gre-

<sup>1</sup> "Lyrici carminis," says Jani, "fons est status animi, quo ad canendum nos ferri sentimus: videmus enim impetum quemdam canendi nos incessere, ubi affectu aliquo, ut gaudii, tristicie, amoris, mæroris, indignationis pleni sumus; ubi objectum aliquod nos fortiter feriit aut complevit; ubi admiratione aut sensu phantasia intenditur."—*Proleg. ad Horat. Carmina*, p. civ.

cian poets, reached such perfection, that he could at one moment sport in the myrtle shade with the grace of Anacreon, and, at the next, emulate the flight of the Theban eagle.

It seems, however, to be universally agreed, that, as a lyric poet at least, Horace has little claim to the praise of originality. Even in those odes which are most original, and, so far as we know, are not translated or imitated from any lyric bard of Greece, the words, the phrases, and sentiments, are all Greek, and evidently proceed from a poet whose mind was imbued not only with the compositions of Alcæus, Pindar, and Sappho, the three writers whom he is supposed chiefly to have imitated, but also with the works of Homer, and of the great tragedians. This particularly appears, as was to be expected, in the epithets attached to Greek places, heroes, or divinities, of which a few examples will suffice :—

Regnum Priami vetus—	Πριάμη πόλις γεραιά. Æschyl. <i>Agamem.</i> 719.
Aptum equis Argos—	Ἄργιος ἱπποβοτοιο. <i>Iliad</i> , β. 289.
Ditesque Mycenæ—	Μυκηνὰς τὰς πολυχρεύας. Sophocles <i>Elect.</i> 9.
Larissæ opimæ—	Λαρίσσαν ἐριβώλακα. <i>Iliad</i> , β. 841.
Erycina ridens—	Φιλομειδῆς Ἀφροδίτη. <i>Iliad</i> , γ. 424.
Marinæ filium Thetidis—	Παῖς ἄλυσας Θετιδός. Eurip. <i>Iphigen. in Aul.</i>
Homicidam Hectorem—	Ἐκτορὸς Ἀνδροφονοιο. <i>Iliad</i> , α. 242.

We find, that the epithets affixed to general objects

are as much Greek as those applied to places and individuals:—

Vacuum aëra—	Ἐρημίας δι' Αἰθέρος. Pindar, <i>Olymp.</i> α. 10.
Loquaces lymphæ—	Λαλον ὑδαρ.
Gelu acuto—	Χιονος ὀξείας
Dulci fistulâ—	Γλυκυς αὐλος. <i>Olymp.</i> X. 112.
Bellum lacrymosum—	Πολυδακρυν Ἄρηα. <i>Iliad</i> , γ. 132.
Dulcè ridentem—	Ἐδυ γιλατσαν. <i>Iliad</i> , β. 270.
Morti atræ—	Μελανος θανατοιο. <i>Iliad</i> , β. 834.
Aureo plectro—	Χρυσῶν πληκτρῶ. Pindar, <i>Nem.</i> α. 42.
Supremum iter—	Ἵστατην ὁδον. Eurip. <i>Alcest.</i> 621.
Lentus amor—	Βραδύνα Αφροδίτη. Sappho.
Liquidum æthera—	Ἵγρον Αἰθέρα
Purpureo ore—	Πορφυρεῖον στοματες. Simonides.
Numero carentis arenæ—	Ἵταμμος ἀριθμον περιπεφειγεν. <i>Olymp.</i> β. 168.

If we proceed from epithets to sentiments, we shall find, that a Greek spirit still prevails in the Latin odes:—

Nil desperandum—	Ἄελπτον ἔδεν. Eurip. <i>Frag.</i>
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— Improvisa leti

Vis rapuit rapietque gentes—

Ὅς δὴ πολλῶν πολιῶν κατέλυσε κερῆνα

Ἢδ' ἐτι καὶ λυσσι.—

*Iliad*, β. 118.



— Nihil est ab omni parte beatum—

’Οὐκ ἔστιν ἔδεν δια τέλος εὐδαιμονεν.

Eurip. *Supplices*, 272.

Dulce et decorum est pro patriâ mori—

Τεθναμιναι γαρ καλον

Περι ἡ πατριδι μαρναμενον.

Tyrtæus, *Frag.*

Mors et fugacem persequitur virum—

’Ο δ’ αν Θανατος ἐκίχε και τον φυγομαχον.

Simonides.

Ætas parentum pejor avis tulit

Nos nequiores ; mox daturos

Progeniem vitiosiore—

’Οην χρυσιοι πατερες γενεην ἐλιποντο

Χειροτερην, ὑμεις δε κακωτερα τεξεισθε.

Aratus.

Horace has also borrowed some excellent precepts from Alcæus :—

Nunc est bibendum—

Νυν χρη μεθυσκειν.

Nullam, Vare, sacrâ vite priùs severis arborem.

Μηδεν ἄλλο φυτευσης πρότερον δένδρον ἀμπελω.

As an example of the manner in which our poet has extended and paraphrased the thoughts of the Greeks, I can only give space for one instance, which shall be taken from his first ode, “Sunt quos curriculo pulverem Olympicum,” &c. :—

’Αελλοποδων μεν τινας εὐφραι-

νυσιν ἵππων τιμαι και στεφανοι,

Της δ’ εν’ πολυχρυσοις θαλαμοις βιοτα.

Τερεπται δε και τις ἐπ’ οἰδμ’ ἄλιον,

Ναι βοα σως διαστειχων.

Pindar. *Fragm.*

It is said, that more than a hundred of the fragments which still remain from the poets of Greece, may be found in these scattered epithets and thoughts of Horace; and hence it may not unreasonably be conjectured, that if all the lyric productions of the Grecian bards had descended to us, it would be discovered that few of his sentiments or images are purely original.<sup>1</sup> Some of the odes, indeed, are merely translations from the Greek,—as the Palinode, from Stesichorus; the Bacchanalian ode to Varus,<sup>2</sup> which has been evidently translated from Alcæus; and the stanzas to Chloe,<sup>3</sup> from Anacreon. In general, those odes on the common topics of love or wine, which chiefly occur in the first and second books, and were probably the earliest productions of their author, may be regarded as translations. Others are what may be called parodies from the Greek, as the ode on the voyage of Virgil, and that addressed to Thaliarchus, in which the descriptions of Alcæus have been applied to Italian scenery.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Fragmenta Græcorum Lyricorum habemus fere ducenta, quorum amplius centum in Horatio reperiuntur expressa. Si omnes Lyrici Græci adhuc exstarent, forte non multa manerent Horatio propria.—Jani, *Proleg.* p. cviii.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. I. od. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Lib. I. 23.

<sup>4</sup> Jani, in his edition of Horace, has pointed out a great number of fragments of Alcæus, and other lyric writers, which correspond precisely with the commencement of different odes of the Latin poet; and he thence concludes, that, if the whole Greek ode were extant, it would be found that the Latin was a mere translation from it. This, however, does not absolutely follow. The first stanza of the twelfth ode of the 1st book, "Quem virum aut

Nothing certainly can be more injurious to the effect of lyrical verse, than that the reader should thus be able to point out, with the utmost precision, the line where the copy of some Greek original ends, and the poet begins to speak from his own feelings. To no species of composition is imitation so hurtful as to lyric poetry ; and the moment we detect a single trace of art, its whole beauty vanishes. We almost fancy that Anacreon, while he sung to his lyre, held the goblet in his hand, and had crowned himself with rose-buds, ere yet they were withered ; that Tyrtaeus, with an accompaniment of martial music, in the camp and in armour, heightened the courage of even Spartan heroes, in their contests with far nobler foes than they afterwards encountered in the slaves of Xerxes ; and that Pindar, crowned with laurel at the Pythian games, poured forth in Delphos his immortal hymns, in honour of the heroes and demigods of Greece. But the odes of Horace were the fruits rather of premeditation, than of impulse : we can only think of their author as quietly composing them at the villa of Mæcenas, or his own Sabine farm, and as writing them out, not from the necessity of giving utterance to an overpowering sentiment, but to obtain the slow approbation of the public, or the smiles of a patrician patron : And it is perhaps the best proof of the force of Horace's genius, that, in spite of this disadvantage,

heroa, lyrâ vel acti," &c. is a version of the second of Pindar's *Olympia*, *Ἀναξίφορμιν γγης ἕμνοι* : but in the subsequent stanzas, Horace departs widely from his original ; and had the commencement only of the Greek ode survived, the inference that the Latin ode was wholly translated from it, would have been erroneous.



he should still command so large a share of our sympathy, that he should excite our enthusiasm with a spell so potent, and that, with all these imitations, he should himself at this moment remain unrivalled and inimitable.

The odes which seem to be of the invention of the Latin poet, are chiefly of that sort which has been termed occasional. He willingly employed his Muse to celebrate a festive day, to lament the departure of a friend, or congratulate him on his return, to record any pleasant occurrence of his own life, or any political event, which might reflect honour on his patrons.

Being of this miscellaneous description, the odes of Horace cannot be all classed; but the greater proportion of them may be reduced under four divisions, —Amatory, Convivial, Moral, and Political.

Those of an Amorous strain, are by far the most numerous. In them he celebrates his love for Lydia, Tyndaris, Lalage, Glycera, and many others, who were perhaps real mistresses, but with fictitious names. The passion he sings, is of a light trivial description, compared with that of the contemporary elegiac poets; and both the style and sentiments are suited to the “*grata protervitas*” of his Glycera. At one time he courteously complains of a rival, or gracefully apologizes for offences committed against the object of his attachment; and, at another, dexterously renews his addresses to a forsaken mistress. Most of the erotic odes relate to the amours of the poet himself: but he sometimes celebrates those of his friends—encouraging

and advising them in their prosecution, or exhorting a mistress to remain faithful to her lover.

The Convivial odes consist of invitations to Mæcenas, and other illustrious friends, to join his social board. He prepares for the entertainment; he provides the accompaniments of music and garlands of flowers, and he celebrates the happy influence of the gifts of Bacchus with fervid and joyous praises. Many of these convivial odes are tempered with moral reflections; and some of them perhaps cannot be well discriminated from the third or Moral class. In those which may be strictly so termed, he fortifies his friends against the dread of death. He exhorts them to enjoy the present, without diving into the secrets hid in futurity, and to secure tranquillity of mind, by the practice of virtue. The strain of the moral odes is always adapted to the peculiar tempers and manners of the friends to whom they are addressed. For an aspiring and ambitious acquaintance he lays down rules of moderation: he attracts one who is melancholy to the enjoyment of existence, and he fixes another, who is prone to change, to an equable tenor of life. To a covetous friend he forcibly declaims against avarice,—showing that exorbitant wealth occasions the greatest evils, and an honest, contented mediocrity, the greatest good. At other times, he writes with yet higher aim, and with more general and extensive views, directing his care from the happiness of individuals to the moral welfare of the state. In the odes which bear this more exalted character, he contrasts the pernicious luxury and inordinate expense of his

contemporaries with the simple frugality of their ancestors; and while seated in the voluptuous villa of Mæcenæ, he casts as it were an eye of regret on the hardy and laborious life of the ancient Sabines. He persuades his countrymen that their corruption of manners, and neglect of religion, were the sole causes of the various calamities with which the state had been recently afflicted; and hence he employs all his poetic powers to renew their sentiments of piety, and restore the purity of their ancient morals. Of this class, perhaps the most beautiful is the first ode of the third book. In that poem he acknowledges the supremacy of Jove, on whom gods and men depend; and thence, descending through various conditions of life, he teaches that true felicity consists in a contented and frugal enjoyment of such blessings as we possess, and not in the pomp of power, or the luxuries which riches can command.

Both in the Moral and Convivial odes, the friends to whom they are addressed are frequently reminded of the shortness of life, and of its closing scene—sometimes, indeed, with a moral scope, but oftner with a view of exciting to the enjoyment of the present hour, by a glance at the uncertainty and gloom of the future. The brief and fleeting nature of existence is recalled to our recollection by a single word or image—the departure of winter, the return of spring, the last rose of the season, the silent flow of a river, or the waning of the moon. Among no class of poets are the ideas of death and the grave so familiar as those of Rome, and among no people were they so likely to



be habitually conjoined or contrasted with pleasurable emotions. At funeral ceremonies, flowers were strewed as emblems of mortality. The mortuary festivals celebrated in spring, when sacrifices were offered to Pale Death, immediately succeeded the joyous feasts of Faunus, and were closely followed by those of Venus, in which nymphs and graces danced on the sward by moonlight, crowned with wreaths of roses and myrtle. The monuments, too, and urns of the deceased, were placed close to the public ways, so as to attract the eye of the heedless passenger, and obtain his valediction for the departed spirit. In travelling from Rome to his Tiburtine villa, Horace must have passed the mausoleums of the Plautian and Livian families, and other heroes of his country. The gloomy images of mortality were thus linked in the imagination to the brightest scenes of nature, and the villa and the vineyard were associated with the tomb.

In a history of Roman Poetry, the Political odes of Horace are those which are most deserving of consideration. They are chiefly of his own composition, instead of being translated or imitated, like so many of the others, from the Greek ; and as they refer to the most prominent events of Roman history, they afford some insight into the political discussions and state intrigues of the day. All of them are written in courtly and soothing language. They breathe that spirit of wisdom, moderation, and humanity, which now began to prevail in the councils of the prince ; and the mildest maxims of policy are inculcated amid bursts of lyric fancy. The second ode is the first of this de-

scription. It was probably among the poet's earliest productions after his reception at court, and probably one of the first that would be placed in the hands of the Emperor. Everything in the state is represented as in dreadful disorder; portents, thunder-storms, inundations, and civil war, are all in full operation; and in these circumstances, Augustus is invoked to retrieve the sinking empire, and expiate the public guilt. The next ode of this class<sup>1</sup> was written about the time when Augustus consulted Mæcenas and Agrippa whether he should resign or retain the sovereign authority. There is still extant in Dio Cassius a speech delivered on this subject by Mæcenas, in which the allegory of a ship and the republic is so closely preserved, that Horace probably derived, from the argument or illustration his patron employed, the design of this ode, in which he speaks with such alarm lest the vessel of the state should be anew tossed over the angry main, the sport of winds and waves, without pilot or rudder. There can be little doubt that the side of the question which Mæcenas espoused was the part to which the imperial propounder was himself inclined; and Horace was doubtless aware, that he offered an acceptable homage to Augustus in persuading the Roman people to insist on his retaining the government, by showing them, under a striking image, the perils to which the empire would be inevitably exposed, if he abandoned its direction. The following ode, "Nerei Vaticinium," was composed on the breaking out of the last civil war be-

<sup>1</sup> Lib. I. 14.

tween Antony and Augustus. Nereus, the sea-god, foretells the ruin of Troy, at the very time that Paris bears Helen over the Ægæan sea from Sparta. Under the character of Paris, our poet, according to some commentators, intended to represent the infatuated Antony, whose passion for Cleopatra he foresaw would be attended with the same disastrous consequences as that of the Trojan prince for Helen; and under the Grecian heroes, whom Nereus in imagination beholds combined against Ilium, Horace, it has been said, represents the leaders of the party of Augustus. There are several other odes on the subject of the civil wars between Antony and Augustus, from the preparations for the arduous struggle till the death of Cleopatra. In all these odes, a constant respect and tenderness for the character of Antony prevail. That leader had combined, in his support, the whole power of the East—his death delivered Augustus from a dangerous rival, and terminated a contest which for many years had desolated the empire. Yet all the indignation of the poet falls on Cleopatra. In the last ode on this topic, her character is drawn with much animation and spirit. All her passions are in violent agitation. Her love is madness, her ambition intoxication, her courage despair. The fate of Antony is not alluded to; and the death of Cleopatra alone, while justice is done to its heroism, is proposed as a subject of public congratulation. Nor on any occasion is the great Pompey, or his son Sextus, long the chief enemy and rival of Augustus, ever mentioned with contumely or disrespect. This forbearance



shows that Horace, while he extolled Augustus, would not flatter him at the expense of more worthy Romans, or that the emperor thought it best that their memory should be forgotten.

In the course of the third book, Horace celebrates the successful military enterprises of Augustus, particularly the reduction of Parthia and Spain. Most of the odes in the fourth book are political, and are said to have been composed by the express command of Augustus. The victories gained in Gaul by two of the most illustrious members of the imperial family, Tiberius and Drusus, seem to have excited much joy and interest at Rome. The praises of Drusus are celebrated in a sublime martial ode, and in strains of majesty and elevation almost Pindaric. But Augustus himself had supported and followed up the conquests of these commanders. Horace, accordingly, while in expectation of his return, wrote one ode, full of expressions of tenderness and affection, as well as of anxiety at his absence from Rome, and another in confident anticipation of his speedy and triumphal entrance into the capital. Our poet, however, justly thought that the military virtues of kings are their least merit. He was aware that the talents of Augustus did not chiefly shine in war, and that he was desirous to obtain a reputation for wisdom in peace, as much as for prowess in arms. In the ode, accordingly, which concludes the fourth book, and which was probably written on occasion of Augustus shutting the temple of Janus, he announces the general pacification of the world—

celebrating the good order which had succeeded to periods of unbridled license, the wholesome laws that had been enacted, the prosperity of agriculture, and the encouragement extended to every art, which was conducive to public utility or private virtue.

It thus appears, that the political odes of Horace chiefly relate to the events of the day, and the praises of the Cæsarean family. But in a few odes he has also celebrated the heroes of the republic, and has proved that his character, as a favourite and courtier, had not obliterated the sentiments of patriotism and feelings of heroic greatness.<sup>1</sup> His excellence, indeed, is never more conspicuous than when he writes altogether as a Roman,—when he dwells on the sublime magnanimity of ancient days, on the solitary grandeur of the exiled Regulus, or on those other heroes who, in his own language, were prodigal of their great souls in the service of the state. The love and pride of country could not be more powerfully excited than by the words which he places in the mouth of Hannibal after he had received intelligence of the defeat of Asdrubal by Claudius Nero. Nor could courage, and the thirst of glory, be more strongly inspired than by the harangue of Regulus to the senate; and I know no passage, even among writers in the highest range of poetry, more expressive of moral dignity and resolution than the picture of that hero's departure for Carthage—

<sup>1</sup> Schlegel, *Lectures on Literature*.

Atqui sciebat quæ sibi barbarus  
 Tortor pararet: non aliter tamen  
 Dimovit obstantes propinquos  
 Et populum reditus morantem,  
 Quam si clientum longa negotia  
 Dijudicatâ lite relinqueret,  
 Tendens Venafranos in agros,  
 Aut Lacedæmonium Tarentum.<sup>1</sup>

The praises, however, of these ancient heroes, even when offered with the greatest appearance of sincerity and admiration, are generally made subservient to his main purpose of rendering homage to the imperial line, and brightening the lustre of the ascendant star—

Crescit occulto velut arbor ævo  
 Fama Marcelli: micat inter omnes  
 Julium sidus, velut inter ignes  
 Luna minores.<sup>2</sup>

It would be superfluous for me to run over the various and well-known excellencies of the odes of Ho-

<sup>1</sup> Lib. III. Od. 5.—The *Attilio Regolo* of Metastasio, which was his own favourite drama, is a beautiful production. Many of the lines are translated from the Latin ode, and it breathes in every scene, if I may so express myself, *l'Aura del Campidoglio*. But there is too much parade, and too many heroic sentiments. Every word and movement of the Italian Regolo is that of a hero, conscious that he is acting a great part as a sacrifice and victim, and that he is voluntarily proceeding to Carthage, torture, and death; not like the Regulus of Horace,

Tendens Venafranos in agros,  
 Aut Lacedæmonium Tarentum.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. I. Od. 12.



race. Critics, in all ages and countries, have extolled his delicacy of thought and expression, the accuracy and liveliness of his delineations, the beauty of his descriptions, and the harmony of his versification. Of all poets who have ever existed, he is perhaps the best entitled to the appellation of *inimitable*. His odes have, in every age, been the constant object of imitation; but all the copies have presented but a faint image of the exquisite original. For this superiority he is chiefly indebted to the matchless turn of expression and language, which the most skilful critic of the Augustan age probably could not have improved by changing a single phrase, or adopting one word for another. It was this "*curiosa felicitas*," as it has been termed—consisting in the employment of the most simple words with dignity, and the most ornamental with ease—that bestowed supreme elegance and grace on every topic he touched, and enabled him to sing with such equal success the coyness of Chloe and triumphs of Augustus, as to leave it doubtful whether the delicacy of his amatory and convivial verses, or the fire and elevation of his moral and political strains, be most admirable. Sometimes we find these qualities united in the same poem; but his power of expression renders the transition easy from a trivial subject to the most noble and lofty conceptions. Thus the wolf, which fled from him in the Sabine forest, leads his thoughts to the security of the man, conscious to himself of rectitude; and the tree, which he feared might have fallen on his head, introduces a description of the infernal regions. In these and si-

milar odes, the materials are so skilfully conjoined, that they scarcely seem heterogeneous.

The want of order and connexion, however, is the fault with which Horace has been chiefly reproached ; but to say nothing of the desultory privileges of the lyric muse, I am satisfied that several of those transitions, which are blamed as too rapid by modern critics, only seem abrupt from ignorance of many ancient customs and associated feelings of the Romans. To one, for example, who did not know that the mortuary festivals immediately succeeded those of Faunus, the following lines might appear disjointed and incongruous :—

Nunc et in umbrosis Fauno decet immolare lucis,  
 Seu poscat agnam sive malit hædum.  
 Pallida Mors æquo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas  
 Regumque turres——

But to a Roman, who at once could trace the association in the mind of the poet, the sudden transition from gaiety to gloom would seem but an echo of the sentiment he himself annually experienced. Other undefinable faults, which some think they perceive in Horace, may perhaps be attributed to the remembrance of distaste at the “ drilled dull lesson :” yet it may be doubted whether the recollections of early life, with which such writers as Horace are associated, do not, in some minds at least, rather heighten than diminish the sympathy and enjoyment. To one they will seem redolent of joy and youth, like the gales of Windsor, while by others they may be only remem-

bered as the lines of Homer were recorded in the memory of Ensign Northerton.<sup>1</sup>

Then farewell, Horace, whom I hated so,  
*Not for thy faults, but mine*; it is a curse  
 To understand, not feel, thy lyric flow;  
 To comprehend, yet never love thy verse:  
 Although no deeper moralist rehearse  
 Our little life, nor bard prescribe his art,  
 Nor livelier satirist the conscience pierce,  
 Awakening, without wounding, the touched heart,  
 Yet fare thee well—upon Soracte's ridge we part.<sup>2</sup>

II. The epodes of Horace may be considered as intermediate compositions between his odes and satires. They are in iambic measure, and a few of them are on similar topics with the odes; but the others consist of invectives, directed against the orator Cassius Severus—the poet Mævius—and Menas, the freedman of Sextus Pompey, who, being admiral of his fleet, became so infamous during the civil wars by alternately deserting the service of Pompey and Octavius. Even to the second epode, containing the praises of a country life, a satirical and epigrammatic turn is given at the conclusion, by putting them in the mouth of the usurer Alphius. In general, however, the satire in these odes is coarse, violent, and personal, resembling what is supposed to have been the style of the invectives of Archilochus and Lycambes, rather than that delicate tone of reproof and irony which Horace afterwards adopted in his own satires.

<sup>1</sup> *Tom Jones*, B. VII. c. 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Childe Harold*, C. IV. st. 77.



III. Horace has now been described as the great master of Roman lyric poetry, whether amatory, convivial, or moral. We have still to consider him as a satiric, humorous, or familiar writer, in which character (though he chiefly valued himself on his odes) he is more instructive, and perhaps equally pleasing. He is also more an original poet in his satires, than in his lyrical compositions. D. Heinsius, indeed, in his confused and prolix dissertation, *De Satirâ Horatianâ*, has pointed out several passages, which he thinks have been suggested by the comedies and satiric dramas of the Greeks. If, however, we except the dramatic form which he has given to so many of his satires, it will be difficult to find any general resemblance between them and those productions of the Greek stage which are at present extant.

It was at Rome that satire first received the rank and character of a distinguishable species of composition from the drama; and it was there clothed in a new and less stately form of the heroic measure than had been employed in heroic poetry. This sort of writing, which is exclusively Roman, in the versification, the spirit with which it is animated, and the subjects of which it treats, had remained in a great measure uncultivated at Rome since the time of Lucilius, who imitated the writers of the Greek comedy, in so far as he unsparingly satirized the political leaders of the state. But Horace did not live, like the Greek comedians, in an unrestrained democracy, or, like Lucilius, under an aristocracy, in which there

was a struggle for power, and court was in consequence occasionally paid to the people.

Satire, more than any other sort of poetry, is influenced by the spirit and manners of the age in which it appears. These are in fact the aliment on which it feeds; and, accordingly, in tracing the progress which had been made in this species of composition, from the time of Lucilius till the appearance of that more refined satire which Horace introduced, it is important to consider the changes that had taken place during this interval, both in the manners of the people, and in the government of the country.

The accumulation of wealth naturally tends to the corruption of a land. But a people, who, like the Romans, suddenly acquires it by war, confiscations, and pillage, degenerates more quickly than the nations among whom it is collected, by the slower processes of art, commerce, and industry. At Rome, a corruption of morals, occasioned chiefly by influx of wealth, had commenced in the age of Lucilius; but virtue had still farther declined in that of Horace. Lucilius arrayed himself on the side of those who affected the austerity of ancient manners, and who tried to stem the torrent of vice, which Greece and the Oriental nations even then began to pour into the heart of the republic. By the time of Horace, the bulwark had been broken down, and those who reared it swept away. Civil war had burst asunder the bonds of society; property had become insecure; and the effects of this general dissolution remained even after the government was steadily administered by a wise and all-

powerful despot. Rome had become not only the seat of universal government and wealth, but also the centre of attraction to the whole family of adventurers—the magnet which was perpetually drawing within its circle the collected worthlessness of the world. Expense, and luxury, and love of magnificence, had succeeded the austerity and moderation of the ancient republic. The example, too, of the chief minister, Mæcenas, inclined the Romans to indulgence in that voluptuous life, which so well accorded with the imperial plans for the stability and security of the government.

A greater change of manners was produced by the loss of liberty, than even by the increase of wealth. The voice of genuine freedom had been last heard in the last *Philippic* of Cicero. Some of the distinguished Romans, who had known and prized the republican forms of government, had fallen in the field of civil contention, or been sacrificed during the proscriptions. Of those who survived, many were conciliated by benefits and royal favour, while others, in the enjoyment of the calm that followed the storms by which the state had been lately agitated, acquiesced in the imperial sway, as now affording the only adequate security for property and life. Courtly compliance, in consequence, took place of that boldness and independence, which characterized a Roman citizen in the age of Lucilius. The Senators had now political superiors to address, and the demeanour which they employed towards the emperor and his advisers, became habitual to them in intercourse with their



equals. Hence, there prevailed a politeness of behaviour and conversation which differed both from the roughness of Cato the censor, and from the open-hearted urbanity of Scipio or Lælius. Satires, directed, like those of Lucilius, and the comic writers of Greece, against political characters in the state, were precluded by the unity and despotism of power. If Lucilius arraigned in his verses Mutius and Lupus, he was supported by Scipio and Lælius, or some other heads of a faction. But in the time of Horace, there were no political leaders, except those tolerated by the emperor; and who would have protected a satirist, in the Augustan age, from the resentment of Mæcenas or Agrippa?

The rise and influence of men like Mæcenas, in whom power and wealth were united with elegant taste and love of splendour, introduced what in modern times has been called *fashion*. They of course were frequently imitated in their villas and entertainments, by those who had no pretensions to emulate such superiors, or who vied with them ungracefully. The wealthy freedman and provincial magistrate, rendered themselves ridiculous by this species of rivalry, and supplied endless topics of sportive satire; for it would appear that Mæcenas, and those within the pale of fashion, had not made that progress in true politeness, which induces either to shun the society of such pretenders, or to endure it without contributing to their exposure. Hence the pictures of the self-importance and ridiculous dress of Aufidius Luscus, and the entertainments of Nasidienus, to which Mæcenas car-

ried his buffoons along with him, to contribute to the sport which the absurdities of their host supplied.

In the time of Augustus, the practice, which in this country has been termed *legacy-hunting*, became literally a profession and employment. Those who followed it did not, like the parasites of old, content themselves with the offals from the board of a patron. Assiduous flattery paid to a wealthy and childless bachelor was considered at Rome as the surest and readiest mode of enrichment, after the confiscations of property were at an end, and the plundering of provinces was prohibited. The desire of amassing wealth continued, though the methods by which it was formerly gained were interdicted, and the Romans had not acquired those habits which might have procured its more honourable gratification.

About the same period, philosophy, which never had made much progress at Rome, was corrupted and perverted by vain pretenders. The unbending principles of the Stoics, in particular, had been carried to such an extravagant length, and were so little in accordance with the feelings of the day, or manners of a somewhat voluptuous court, that whatever ridicule was cast upon them could scarcely fail to be generally acceptable and amusing.

We have already seen that in the age of Augustus the Romans had become a nation of poets, and that many, who had no real pretensions to the character, sought to occupy in rhyming, that time which, in the days of the republic, would have been employed in more worthy exertions. The practice, too, of recitations to friends, or in public assemblies, was intro-

duced about the same period ; and it was sometimes no easy matter to escape from the vanity and impotency of those who were predetermined to delight their neighbours with the splendour and harmony of their verses.

In short, foppery and absurdity of every species prevailed ; but the Augustan age was one rather of folly than of atrocious crime. Augustus had done much for the restoration of good order and the due observance of the laws ; and though the vices of luxury had increased, the salutary efforts of his administration checked those more violent offences that so readily burst forth amid the storms of an agitated republic. Nor did the court of Augustus present that frightful scene of impurity and cruelty, which, in the reign of Domitian, raised the scorn, and called forth the satiric indignation, of Juvenal. In the time of Horace, Rome was rather a theatre, where inconsistency and folly performed the chief parts, and where nothing better remained for the wise than to laugh at the comedy which was enacted.

That Horace was not an indifferent spectator of this degradation of his country, appears from his glowing panegyrics on the ancient patriots of Rome, his retrospects to a better age, and to the simplicity of the "*prisca gens mortalium*." But no better weapon was left him than the light shafts of ridicule. What could he have gained by pursuing the guilty, sword in hand, as it were, like Lucilius, or arrogating to himself among courtiers and men of the world the character of an ancient censor ? The tone which he struck was the only one that suited the period and circum-



stances : it pervades the whole of his satires, and is assumed, whatever may be the folly or defects which he thinks himself called on to expose.

A wide field in those days was left open for satire, as its province was not restricted or pre-occupied by comedy. At Rome, there never had been any national drama in which Roman life was exhibited to the public. The plays of Terence and his contemporaries represented Greek, not Roman, manners ; and towards the close of the republic, and commencement of the empire, the place of the regular comedy was usurped by mimes, or pantomimes. All the materials, then, which in other countries have been seized by writers for the stage, were exclusively at the disposal and command of the satirist. In the age of Louis XIV. Boileau would scarcely have ventured to draw a full-length portrait of a misanthrope or hypocrite. But Horace encountered no Moliere, on whose department he might dread to encroach ; and accordingly, his satires represent almost every diversity of folly incident to human nature. Sometimes, too, he bestows on his satires, at least to a certain extent, a dramatic form ; and thus avails himself of the advantages which the drama supplies. By introducing various characters discoursing in their own style, and expressing their own peculiar sentiments, he obtained a wider range than if everything had seemed to flow from the pen of the author. How could he have displayed the follies and foibles of the age so well as in the person of a slave, perfectly acquainted with his master's private life ? how could he have exhibited the

extravagance of a philosophic sect so justly as from the mouth of the pretended philosopher, newly converted to stoicism ? or how could he have described the banquet of Nasidienus with such truth as from the lips of a guest who had been present at the entertainment ?

Horace had also at his uncontested disposal, all those materials, which, in modern times, have contributed to the formation of the novel or romance. Nothing resembling that attractive species of composition appeared at Rome, before the time of Petronius Arbiter, in the reign of Nero. Hence, those comic occurrences on the street, at the theatre, or entertainments—the humours of taverns—the adventures of a campaign or journey, which have supplied a Le Sage and a Fielding with such varied exhibitions of human life and manners, were all reserved untouched for the Satiric Muse to combine, exaggerate, and diversify.

Great scope was afforded for this species of composition by the infinite variety and peculiarities of Roman character. The Romans, indeed, had lost their political liberty ; but in the time of Augustus, when no imperial master had as yet shown that dark suspicion which introduced distrust into private life, every man might be what he pleased, and choose the manners best suited to his inclination. In this respect, the Romans seem, in some degree, to have resembled the inhabitants of Britain, who have been so long remarkable for their peculiarities, whimsical humours, and varieties of temper. Even among the highest political characters of the empire, we have already had occasion to remark Agrippa's love of power and

of magnificence, the negligent effeminacy of Mæcenas, the fickleness of Plancus, the wantonness of Delilius, Pollio's haughty freedom of speech and contempt of common restraints, and Messala's lingering love of liberty, exhibited in his fondness for the ancient forms of the commonwealth. These, indeed, were men who were placed far above the bite of the satirist ; but similar distinctions prevailed, and perhaps became more marked, in subordinate stations.

The chief talent of Horace's patrons, Augustus and Mæcenas, lay in a true discernment of the tempers and abilities of mankind ; and Horace himself was distinguished by his quick perception of character, and his equal acquaintance with books and men. These qualifications and habits, and the advantages derived from them, will be found apparent in almost every Satire.

1st.—A desire of amassing enormous wealth was one of the most prevalent passions of the time ; and amid the struggles of civil warfare, the lowest of mankind had succeeded in accumulating fortunes. It is against this inordinate rage that the first satire is directed. In a dialogue supposed to be held between the poet and a miser, the former exposes the folly of those who occupy themselves solely in the acquisition of wealth, and replies to all the arguments which the miser adduces in favour of hoarding.

2d.—The poet here shows the dangers incurred by those who intrigue with married women. But he rather points out the hazard of such intercourse, than reprobates the moral stain.



3d.—This satire is directed against the inclination which many persons feel to put a bad construction on the actions of others, and to exaggerate the faults which they may perceive in their characters or dispositions. This failing, which perhaps had not been very prevalent in republican Rome, when the citizens lived openly in each other's view, had increased under a monarchical government, in which secrecy produced mistrust and suspicion. The satirist concludes with refuting the absurd principle of the Portico—that all faults and vices have the same degree of enormity.

4th.—It would appear, that during the lifetime of Horace, the public were divided in their judgment concerning his satires—some blaming them as too severe, while others thought them weak and trifling. Our author, in order to vindicate himself from the charge of indulging in too much asperity, shows, in a manner the most prepossessing, that he had been less harsh than many other poets, and pleads, as his excuse for at all practising this species of composition, the education he had received from his father, who, when he wished to deter him from any vice, showed its bad consequences in the example of others.

5th.—This little poem contains the account of a journey from Rome to Brundisium, which Horace performed in company with Mæcenas, Virgil, Plotius, and Varius. Though travelling on affairs of state, their progress more resembled an excursion of pleasure, than a journey requiring the despatch of plenipotentiaries. They took their own villas on the way, where they entertained each other in turn, and declined no amuse-

ment which they met with on the road. They must indeed have proceeded only one or two stages daily, for the distance was about 350 miles ; and according to those critics who have minutely traced their progress, and ascertained the resting places, the journey occupied twelve or fifteen days. The poet satirically and comically describes the inconveniences encountered on the road, and all the ludicrous incidents which occurred. The ridiculous ensigns of power assumed by the recorder of a petty country town, and some local superstitions, afforded infinite mirth, while the squabble between Sarmentus and Cicirrus, two buffoons in the train of Mæcenas, furnished laughter for a whole evening. There is something agreeable to a modern reader in being thus introduced, as it were, to familiarity and intimacy with Mæcenas and Virgil ; and commentators have considered this satire as a perfect model of the narrative style of poetry ; but objections have been made to some of its details. “ It is true,” says Gibbon, “ that I observe in it with pleasure two well-applied strokes of satire—one against the stupid pride of the prætor of Fundi, and another against the more stupid superstition of the people of Gnatia ; but I would not hesitate to pronounce, that the almost unknown journey of Rutilius is superior to that of Horace in point of description, poetry, and especially in the choice of incidents. The gross language of a boatman, and the ribaldry of two buffoons, surely belong only to the lowest species of comedy. They might divert travellers in a humour to be pleased with everything ; but how could a man of taste reflect on them the day after ?

They are less offensive, however, than the infirmities of the poet, which occur more than once—the plasters which he applies to his eyes, and the accident which befell him in the night. The maxim, that everything in great men is interesting, applies only to their minds, and ought not to be extended to their bodies. What unworthy objects for the attention of Horace, when the face of the country, and the manners of its inhabitants, in vain offered to him a field of instruction and pleasure ! Perhaps this journey, which our poet made in company with Mæcenas, creating much envy against him, he wrote this piece to convince his enemies that his thoughts and occupations on the road were far from being of a serious or political nature.”<sup>1</sup> It seems, however, to be more probable that it was merely written for the amusement of the party, and not with any view towards the entertainment of the public.

It is generally thought, that the idea of this poem was suggested to Horace by the satire of his predecessor Lucilius, who, among other incidents of his life, has described a journey which he performed from Rome along the rich coast of Campania, all the way to Reggio, on the Straits of Messina. In turn, it gave rise to such works as the *Voyage de Bachaumont et Chapelle*. The almost unknown poem of Rutilius, mentioned by Gibbon, is the *Itinerarium* of Rutilius Numatianus, a Latin author, in the time of Arcadius and Honorius. It is a long though now imperfect poem, giving an account, in a serious style,

<sup>1</sup> *Miscellaneous Works*, Vol. IV. p. 345.



of his return from Rome to Gaul, which was his native country.

6th.—This poem, addressed to Mæcenas, is chiefly valuable for the information which it contains concerning the life of our author, particularly his early education, and the circumstances attending his first introduction to that minister. He also descants on the virtue and frugality of his own life—he mentions candidly some of his foibles, and describes his table, equipage, and amusements. Here every particular is interesting. We behold him, though a courtier, simple in his pleasures, and in his temper and manners, honest, warm, and candid, as the old Auruncian.

7th.—A law suit is here mentioned for the purpose of introducing a very indifferent witticism of one of the litigants. The case was pleaded before Marcus Brutus, who at the time was Proconsul of Asia Minor, and was making a progress through his government for the purpose of distributing justice. The parties being named Persius and Rupilius *Rex*, the former, during the hearing of the cause, asked Brutus, why, as it was the practice of his family to destroy kings, he did not cut the throat of his opponent? “A miserable clench,” says Dryden, “in my opinion, for Horace to record. I have heard honest Mr Swan make many a better, and yet have had the grace to hold my countenance.” At this distance of time, the story has certainly lost all its zest; but the faces and gestures of the parties, and the impudence of addressing this piece of folly to such a man as Brutus, may have diverted the audience, and made an impression

on Horace, who was perhaps present, as he at that time followed the fortunes of the conspirator.

8th.—The design of this satire is to ridicule the superstitions of the Romans. Priapus is introduced, describing the incantations performed by Canidia, in a garden on the Esquiline Hill, which he protected from thieves. But he could not guard it from the intrusion of Canidia and a sister hag, who resorted there for the celebration of their unhallowed rites. Their enchantments and ceremonies bear much resemblance to those which have been attributed to modern witches. They fill a pit with the blood of a black lamb; they form two waxen figures, and bury in the earth a wolf's beard and the tooth of a serpent. Most of the romantic fictions of the times of chivalry may be referred to classical mythology, and the incantations or witchcraft of paganism differed little from the sorcery exercised in the dark ages. The heathens, like the Christians, distinguished between good and bad magic. It was believed in the ancient, as well as more modern superstitions, that a preternatural dominion over nature was usurped, from the vilest motives of malice or gain, by some wrinkled hag or vagrant sorcerer, who passed their obscure lives in penury and contempt. The rites or ingredients were the same in ancient and modern spells, and both were calculated to recall or extinguish life, to excite love or hatred, to blast the works of creation, and extort from demons the secrets of futurity.

This satire, and the two epodes in which Canidia's incantations are recited, may be curious for the history

of ancient witchcraft ; but they are not possessed of high poetical merit. “ The Erietho of Lucan,” says Gibbon, “ is tedious and disgusting, yet sometimes sublime ; but the Canidia of Horace is a vulgar witch.”<sup>1</sup>

9th.—Horace describes the unavailing efforts which he employs to get rid of an importunate acquaintance—a fop and poetaster, who tires and overwhelms him with his loquacity. Sometimes he stops short, and then walks fast ; but all his endeavours are vain to shake off the intruder. A few of the touches of this finished portrait, which is surpassed by none in delicacy of colouring and accuracy of delineation, have been taken from the characters of Theophrastus. It has served in its turn as the model for the amusing picture, in the eighth satire of the old French poet Regnier, entitled, “ *L'Importun, ou le Fâcheux*.”

10th.—In this piece, which is entirely critical, Horace supports an opinion he had formerly pronounced concerning the satires of Lucilius, which had given offence to the numerous admirers of that ancient bard. This closes the first book ; and nearly the same subjects continue to be treated in the second. In the first book, however, the satires are chiefly directed against vices and follies : Those in the second seem more particularly intended to expose errors and absurdities in opinion, especially the false principles which were maintained in the poet’s time by pretended philosophers.

1st.—Our author, observing that many persons were irritated and alarmed by the license of his satiric

<sup>1</sup> *Decline, &c. of Rom. Emp. c. 25.*



muse, states the case to his friend, the lawyer Trebatius, who had been known as a professed wit in the age of Cicero, and who humorously dissuades him from again venturing on the composition of satires. The poet, however, resolves to persevere, and, in pleading his cause, indulges in his natural disposition for satire and ridicule with his wonted freedom.

I believe it was in the reign of Charles II. that the adaptation of ancient satiric poetry to the events and manners of modern times, first commenced in England. It was practised in that reign by Oldham and Rochester, who, in his "*Allusion*" to the tenth satire of the first book, applied to Dryden and Crown what Horace had originally said of Lucilius and Laberius. In talking of the compositions of Dryden, almost in the same terms which Horace employs concerning Lucilius,—

Nempe incomposito dixi pede currere versus,—

and in the observations on some others of his poetical contemporaries, he showed more wit than either taste or judgment ; but the parody was considered at the moment as peculiarly happy ; and from his time, this sort of composition, which holds as it were a middle place between translation and original design, became extremely popular in consequence of its unexpected applications and lucky parallels. Pope, as is well known, has conveyed a considerable portion of his satire under the form of imitations of Horace, accommodating what the Latin poet had written concerning Pantolabus and Nomentanus, to the fools and

flatterers, and prodigals, of his own age. One winter, when he was confined to his chamber for some days by sickness, Lord Bolingbroke came to see him ; and in turning over a copy of Horace, lighted on this first satire of the second book. He observed how well that would hit Pope's case, were he to imitate it in English. When Lord Bolingbroke was gone, he read it over, translated it in a morning or two, and sent it to the press in a week or fortnight afterwards ; and this was the occasion of his subsequently imitating several others.<sup>1</sup> Pope was peculiarly well fitted for such parodies, as his mind was much of the same turn with that of Horace. They became his favourite amusement, and had in their day the greatest run of all his works. In these imitations he has not shackled himself with a close parallel to the Latin poet, but has followed his general train of ideas, improving his hints, and sometimes making excursions of his own, as occasion prompted. In his strictures, he often affects sportive humour, but he is habitually keen and caustic ; and the very first imitation shows how much in earnest he applied the censorial rod. Except in some few passages, he has reached the ease and vivacity of the original, and sometimes rises above his model in the air of moral dignity which he assumes, and in that power of expression and sentiment which is almost peculiar to himself.

2d.—This satire on the luxury and gluttony of the Romans, is put into the mouth of a Sabine peasant,

<sup>1</sup> Spence's *Anecdotes*, p. 62.

whom Horace calls Ofellus, and whose plain good sense is agreeably contrasted with the extravagance and folly of the Great. He delivers rules of temperance with the utmost ease and simplicity of manner, and thus bestows more truth and liveliness on the pictures, than if Horace (who was himself known to frequent the luxurious tables of patricians) had inculcated the moral precepts in his own person. This satire has been the object of Pope's second parody of Horace, addressed to Mr Bethel.

3d.—The form of dialogue which was probably introduced by the Latin satirists, from imitation of the ancient Greek comedy, is employed in this satire. Horace converses with a Stoic, who was well known at Rome for the extravagant opinions which he entertained. In this fictitious dialogue, the pretended philosopher adduces the authority of a brother charlatan, to prove that all mankind are mad, with exception of the stoical sage. They deal out folly to every one in large portions, and assign Horace himself his full share. The various classes of men, the ambitious, luxurious, avaricious, and amorous, are distributed by them, as it were, into so many groups, or pictures, of exquisite taste and beauty, in which are delineated, with admirable skill, all the ruling passions that tyrannise over the heart of man. Some of their precepts are excellent, and expressed in lively and natural terms; but occasional bursts of extravagance show that it was the object of the poet to turn their theories into jest, and to expose their interpretation of the principles established by the founders of their sect.



4th.—A person called Catius repeats to Horace the lessons he had received from an eminent *gastro-nome*, who, with the most important air, and in the most solemn language, had delivered a variety of culinary precepts.

5th.—To this satire, also, a dramatic form is given : In a discourse supposed to be held between Ulysses and Tiresias, Horace satirizes the sordid attempts frequently made by Roman citizens, to enrich themselves, by paying assiduous court to old and wealthy bachelors. There is considerable pleasantry in the satire itself, but its subject is introduced in a forced and improbable manner. Homer, in the eleventh book of the *Odyssey*, had represented Ulysses as consulting Tiresias on the means of being restored to his native country ; and Horace, commencing his dialogue at the point where it was left off by the Greek poet, introduces Ulysses ruined in fortune, and destitute of all things, seeking advice of Tiresias as to the mode of repairing his fortune. The answer of the prophet forms the subject of the satire, and is so directly levelled at the manners of the Romans, that we cannot forget the incongruity of these being described in a dialogue between a Grecian chief and a Grecian soothsayer, both of whom existed before the foundation of Rome. The whole, however, may perhaps be regarded as a sort of parody, in which Greek names and characters are accommodated to the circumstances of Roman life.

6th.—A panegyric on the felicity of rural existence, in which the poet contrasts the calm and tran-

quail amusements of the country with the tumultuous and irregular pleasures of the capital, and thus delightfully expresses his longing after rural ease and retirement :

O rus, quando ego te aspiciam? quandoque licebit  
Nunc veterum libris, nunc somno et inertibus horis,  
Ducere sollicitæ jucunda oblivia vitæ?

In order to give force to his eulogy on a country life, he introduces the well-known and apposite fable of the town and country mouse. This tale, which is inimitably told, has been paraphrased by Cowley, and by R. Henryson, an old Scotch poet of the reign of James IV. in his *Borrowstoun Mous and Landwart Mous*.<sup>1</sup> It also occurs in the *Fables* of Marie of France, and it forms the ninth fable of the first book of Fontaine, under the title of “Le Rat de Ville et le Rat des Champs.” Horace, in his satires and epistles, has introduced a good many stories and narratives, illustrative of his subject, which have all the requisites of fables. He probably was not the inventor of them; indeed, he refers to them as well known and current in the world, but he tells them with all the conciseness of Phædrus, and simplicity of La Fontaine. Both these writers have availed themselves of everything in Horace which they could accommodate to their own style of writing. Horace’s frog, which strove, by blowing herself up, to equal the bulk of a calf,<sup>2</sup> is the “Rana et Bos” of Phædrus,<sup>3</sup> and Fontaine’s “La Grenouille qui veut se faire aussi grosse que le Bœuf.”<sup>4</sup> The hungry mouse which had

<sup>1</sup> Ramsay’s *Evergreen*, Vol. I.

<sup>2</sup> *Sat. Lib. II. 3.*

<sup>3</sup> *Lib. I. 23.*

<sup>4</sup> *Liv. I. 8.*

crept by a hole into a corn-chest, and, when well fed, could not get out again,<sup>1</sup> corresponds with Fontaine's "La Belette entrée dans un Grenier;"<sup>2</sup> and the horse, who, to avenge himself on a stag, takes up a man for his rider, and yields to the rein for life,<sup>3</sup> is "Le Cheval s'étant voulu venger du Cerf" of Fontaine,<sup>4</sup> as also the "Equus et Aper" of Phædrus,<sup>5</sup>—the stag being merely changed into a boar by the Latin fabulist.

7th.—The dialogue which here takes place between Horace and one of his slaves, must be supposed to have been held during the *Saturnalia*. Availing himself of the freedom allowed to his class during that season, the slave upbraids his master with his defects and vices, and maintains, in conformity with one of those paradoxes borrowed from the Grecian schools, That the wise man alone is free. His sarcasms have so much truth and bitterness, that his master at length loses temper, and, being unable to answer him, silences him with menaces. The fifth satire of Persius hinges on the same philosophical paradox; but that poet has taken twice the number of verses to express the same ideas as Horace, and after all has expressed them more obscurely.

8th.—This satire contains an account, by one of the guests who was present, of a banquet given by a person of the name of Nasidienus to Mæcenas. The host had invited three persons, of first-rate distinction at the court of Augustus, along with the minister.

<sup>1</sup> *Epist.* I. 7.

<sup>2</sup> III. 17.

<sup>3</sup> *Epist.* I. 10.

<sup>4</sup> IV. 13.

<sup>5</sup> IV. 4.



Mæcenâs brought with him two others of the same rank ; and a couple of buffoons completed the party. The description of the entertainment exhibits a picture, probably as true as it is lively, of a Roman feast, given by a person of bad taste affecting the manners that prevailed in a superior rank. An ill-judged expense and profusion had loaded the table ; every elegance of the season was procured, but was either tainted from being too long kept, or spoiled in dressing, by a cook who had forgotten his art in a miser's kitchen. Yet the host commends every dish with such an impertinent and ridiculous affectation, that he at last talks his guests out of his mansion. The tenth satire of Regnier and third of Boileau are on a similar subject.

It thus appears, that the satires of Horace are nearly confined to the manners of the capital itself—to the social habits and customs, the amusements, spectacles, and assemblies of its inhabitants. As public virtues had in the time of Augustus become of inferior consequence, the social and domestic qualities had assumed additional importance ; and to correct the follies or amend the errors of private life formed at present the most useful and laudable object of the satirist. The morals of the Roman people were now daily approaching to the last stage of degradation ; but these are still described by Horace with a certain ease and good-humour, which render his satires, so far as regards the conduct of private life, comparatively mild. He is less serious and dogmatic than Persius, less vehement than Juvenal, less sharp than Pope or Boileau, less

peevish and discontented than Ariosto, less bitter than Salvator Rosa.

IV. It has been frequently discussed, whether the epistles of Horace should be considered as a continuation of his satires? or, if they be not a sequel to them, what forms the difference between these two sorts of composition? Casaubon has maintained, that the satires and epistles were originally comprised under the general name of *Sermones*; but that, in the poems to which critics subsequently gave the name of satires, Horace has attempted to extirpate prejudices, and, in the epistles, to inculcate lessons of virtue,<sup>1</sup> so that the two works, united, form a complete course of morals. This opinion has been adopted by Dacier, Wieland, and many other critics. Some commentators, however, have found that the satires and epistles had so many other distinctive characteristics, that they cannot be classed together. An epistle, they maintain, is necessarily addressed to an individual, not merely in the form of a dedication, but in such a manner that his character, and the circumstances under which it is inscribed to him, essentially affect the subject of the poem.<sup>2</sup> The legitimate object of satire is to brand vice or chastise folly; but the epistle has no fixed or determinate scope. It may be satirical, but it may, with equal propriety, be complimentary or critical. Add to this, that the satire may, and in the hands of Horace frequently does, assume a dramatic shape;

<sup>1</sup> *De Satir. Roman. Lib. II. c. 3.*

<sup>2</sup> Morgenstern, *De Sat. et Epist. Horat. Discrimine.*

but the epistle cannot receive it, the epistolary form being essential to its existence.

The epistles of Horace were written by him at a more advanced period of life than his satires, and were the last fruits of his long experience. Accordingly, we find in them more matured wisdom, more sound judgment, mildness, and philosophy, more of his own internal feelings, and greater skill and perfection in the versification. The chief merit, however, of the epistles depends on the variety in the characters of the persons to whom they are addressed; and, in conformity with which, the poet changes his tone, and diversifies his colouring. They have not the generality of some modern epistles, which are merely inscribed with the name of a friend, and may have been composed for the whole human race; nor of some ancient Idyls, where we are solely reminded of an individual by superfluous invocations on his name. Each epistle is written expressly for the entertainment, instruction, or reformation of him to whom it is addressed. The poet enters into his situation with wonderful facility, and every word has a reference, more or less remote, to his circumstances, feelings, or prejudices. In his satires, the object of Horace was to expose vice and folly; but in his epistles he has also an eye to the amendment of a friend, on whose failings he gently touches, and hints, perhaps, at their correction.

That infinite variety of Roman character, which was of so much service to Horace in the composition of his satires, was also of advantage to the epistles, by



affording opportunities of light and agreeable compliment, or of gentle rebuke, to those friends to whom they were addressed. "The knowledge of these characters," says Blackwell, "enables us to judge with certainty of the capital productions of the Roman genius, and the conduct of their most admired writers, and thus observe the address of Horace in adjusting his compliments to the various tempers of his friends. One was proud of his high descent, but ashamed to own that he was so; another valued himself on the honours and offices he had borne; and a third, despising these honours, hugged himself in the elegance of his table, and the pleasures of his private life. A hint to the first of these, of the nobleness of his blood, would make it flush in his face. Consulships, and triumphs, and provinces, would be the welcome subject to the ear of the second; and the vanity of these pageants, a smile at a lictor, or jest on the fasces, would steal a smile from the last."<sup>1</sup>

The first book contains twenty epistles of a very miscellaneous nature.—Our poet asks news from Julius Florus, enquires concerning the health and occupations of Tibullus, invites Manlius Torquatus to supper, recommends a friend to Tiberius, and explains himself to Mæcenus with regard to some want of deference, or attention, of which his patron had complained. On such ordinary and even trivial topics, he bestows novelty, variety, and interest, by the charm of language and expression. Other epistles treat of his

<sup>1</sup> *Court of Augustus*, Vol. I. p. 5.

favourite subject, the happiness and tranquillity of a country life; and we know that these were actually penned while enjoying, during the autumn heats, the shady groves, and the cool streams of his Sabine retreat. In a few, he rises to the higher tone of moral instruction, explaining his own philosophy, and inveighing, as in the satires, against the inconsistency of men, and their false desires for wealth and honours. From his early youth, Horace had collected maxims from all the sects of Greece, searching for truth with an eclectic spirit, alike in the shades of the Academy and Gardens of Epicurus. In these philosophic epistles, he sometimes rises to the moral grandeur and majesty of Juvenal:—

————— hic murus æneus esto,  
Nil conscire sibi, nullâ pallescere culpâ;

while other lines possess all the shrewdness, good sense, and brevity of the maxims of Publius Syrus:—

Dulcis inexpertis cultura potentis amici.

\* \* \* \* \*

Percontatorem fugito, nam garrulus idem.

\* \* \* \* \*

Nec vixit male, qui natus moriensque fefellit.

The great principle of his moral philosophy is, that happiness depends on the frame of the mind, and not on the adventitious circumstances of wealth or power. This is the precept which he endeavours to instil into Aristius—this is his warning to Bullatius, who sought by roaming to other lands to heal his dis-

tempered spirit. What disposition of mind is most conducive to tranquillity and happiness, and how these are best to be obtained, form the constant subject of his moral enquiries :—

Quâ ratione queas traducere leniter ævum ;  
 Quid minuat curas, quid te tibi reddat amicum,  
 Quid pure tranquillet ; honos an dulce lucellum,  
 An secretum iter, et fallentis semita vitæ.

The epistles of the first book are chiefly ethical, or familiar. Those of the second, in which there are only two epistles, are almost wholly critical. The first of these is the celebrated epistle to Augustus, who, it seems, had, in a kind and friendly manner, chid our poet for not having addressed to him any of his satiric, or epistolary compositions. The chief object of Horace, in the verses which he in consequence inscribed to the emperor, was to propitiate his favour in behalf of the poets of the day. One great obstacle to their full enjoyment of imperial patronage, and to their success with the public in general, arose from that inordinate admiration which prevailed for the works of the older Roman poets. A taste, whether real or pretended, for the most antiquated productions, appears to have been almost universal, and Augustus himself showed manifest symptoms of this predilection.<sup>1</sup> In the age of Horace, poetry had, no doubt, been greatly improved : but, hitherto, criticism had been little cultivated, and, as yet, had scarcely been professed as an

<sup>1</sup> Sueton. *in August.* c. 89.



art among the Romans. Hence, the public taste had not kept pace with the poetical improvements, and was scarcely fitted, or duly prepared, to relish them. Some, whose ears were not yet accustomed to the majesty of Virgil's numbers, or the softness of Ovid's versification, were still pleased with the harsh and rugged measure, not merely of the most ancient hexameters, but even of the Saturnian lines : while others, impenetrable to the refined wit and delicate irony of Horace himself, retained their preference for the coarse humour and quibbling jests, which disgraced the old comic drama. A few of these detractors may have affected, merely from feelings of political spleen, to prefer the unbridled scurrility, and the bold uncompromising satire of a republican age, to those courtly refinements, which they might wish to insinuate were the badge of servitude : But the greater number obstinately maintained this partiality from malicious motives, and with a view, by invidious comparison, to disparage and degrade their contemporaries, who laid claim to poetical renown. Accordingly, the first aim of Horace, in his epistle to Augustus, is to lessen this undue admiration, by a satirical representation of the faults of the ancient bards, and the absurdity of those, who, in spite of their manifold defects, were constantly extolling them as models of perfection. But it must be admitted, that, in pursuit of this object, which was in some degree selfish, Horace has too much depreciated the Fathers of Roman Song. He is in no degree conciliated by their strong sense, their vigorous expression, or their lively accurate represen-

tations of life and manners. The old Auruncian receives no favour, though he was the founder of that art, in which Horace himself chiefly excelled, and had left it to his successor, only to polish and refine. While decrying the gross jests of Plautus, he has paid no tribute to the comic force of his Muse: nor, in the general odium thrown on his illustrious predecessors, has he consecrated a single line of panegyric to the native strength of Ennius, the simple majesty of Lucretius, or even the pure style and unsullied taste of Terence.

His epistle, however, is a masterpiece of delicate flattery and critical art. The poet introduces his subject, by confessing that the Roman people had, with equal justice and wisdom, heaped almost divine honours on Augustus, while yet present among them; but that, in matters of taste, they were by no means so equitable, since they treated the living bard, however high his merit, with contempt, and reserved their homage for those, whom they dignified with the name of ancients. He confutes one argument by which this prepossession was supported:—That the oldest Greek writers being incontestably superior to those of modern date, it followed that the like preference should be given to the antiquated Roman masters.

Having obviated the popular and reigning prejudice against modern poets, he proceeds to conciliate the imperial favour in their behalf, by placing their pretensions in a just light. This leads him to give a sketch of the progress of Latin poetry, from its rude commencement in the service of a barbarous supersti-

tion, till his own time ; and to point out the various causes which had impeded the attainment of perfection, particularly in the theatrical department, as the little attention paid to critical learning, the love of lucre, which had infected Roman genius, and the preference given to illiberal sports and shows, above all the genuine beauties of the drama. He at length appropriately concludes his interesting subject, by applauding Augustus for the judicious patronage, which he had already afforded to meritorious poets, and showing the importance of still farther extending his protection to those who have the power of bestowing immortality on princes. It is difficult to say, what influence this epistle may have had on the taste of the age. That it contributed to conciliate the favour of the public for the writers of the day seems highly probable ; but it does not appear to have eradicated the predilection for the oldest class of poets, which continued to be felt in full force as late as the reign of Nero.<sup>1</sup>

It is well known that this epistle has been imitated by Pope, who has applied, to the old poets of his own country, what Horace wrote of the ancient bards of Rome. The English parody is full of the brightest sallies of wit, and the keenest strokes of ridicule. In this sort of composition, however, the whole ought to be modernised, otherwise the different parts will inevitably appear incongruous. Thus, while substituting the names of our old English princes, for that of Ro-

<sup>1</sup> Pers. *Sat.* I. v. 76, &c.



mulus, it would have been suitable, for the sake of consistency, that Hercules had been transmuted into some modern worthy ; since, however congenial may be his fame with that of the half fabulous kings of Rome, Alfred and Alcides form an awkward jumble :

Edward and Henry, now the boast of fame,  
 And virtuous Alfred, a more sacred name,  
 Closed their long glories with a sigh to find  
 The unwilling gratitude of base mankind.  
 The great Alcides, every labour past, &c.

This production of Horace, has also been parodied by Soame Jenyns, in an epistle to Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, in which he has converted the sentiments expressed by Horace on Roman poets and poetry, to the subject of English politics, and the characters of political leaders in the preceding age.

2d.—This epistle is also in some degree critical. Julius Florus, a friend of our poet, on leaving Rome to attend Tiberius on one of his military expeditions, asked Horace to send him some lyric odes: but our poet excuses his neglect of this request, from the various distractions to which he was liable. One of these arose from the multitude of bad and conceited poets, with which the capital swarmed. Accordingly, his justification is enlivened with much raillery on the vanity of contemporary authors, and their insipid compliments to each other, while the whole is animated with a fine spirit of criticism, and valuable precepts for our instruction in poetry. This has also been parodied by Pope, in the same style as the preceding epistle.

The celebrated work of Horace, commonly called the *Ars Poetica*, which was written about the year 739, and is usually considered as a separate and insulated composition, may be more properly regarded as the third epistle of this book ; since, like the others, it is chiefly critical, and addressed to the Pisos, in an epistolary form. These friends of the author were a father and two sons. The father was a senator, of considerable note and distinguished talents, who was consul in 739. He was a man of pleasure, who passed his evenings at table, and slept till noon ; but he possessed such capacity for business, that the remainder of the day sufficed for the despatch of those important affairs with which he was successively intrusted by Augustus and Tiberius. Of the sons little is accurately known, and there seems no reason why a formal treatise on the art of poetry should have been addressed either to them or to their father. As the subjects of Horace's epistles, however, have generally some reference to the situation and circumstances of the individuals with whose names they are inscribed, it has been conjectured that this work was composed at the desire of Piso the father, in order to dissuade his elder son from indulgence in his inclination for writing poetry, for which he probably was but ill qualified, by exposing the ignominy of bad poets,<sup>1</sup> and by pointing out the difficulties of the art ; which our author, accordingly, has displayed under the sem-

<sup>1</sup> Morgenstern, *De Sat. et Epist. Horat. Discrim.*

blance of instructing him in its precepts. This conjecture, first formed by Wieland, and adopted by Colman, in the notes to his translation of the *Ars Poetica*, is chiefly founded on the argument, that Horace, having concluded all that he had to say on the history and progress of poetry, and general precepts of the art, addresses the remainder of the epistle on the nature, expediency, and difficulty of poetical pursuits, to the elder of the brothers alone, who, according to this theory, either meditated or had actually written a poetical work, probably a tragedy, which Horace wished to dissuade him from completing and publishing—

“ O major juvenum, quamvis et voce paternâ,” &c.

It has been much disputed, whether Horace, in writing the *Ars Poetica*, intended to deliver instructions on the whole art of poetry, and criticisms on poets in general, or if his observations be applicable only to certain departments of poetry, and poets of a particular period. The opinion of the most ancient scholiasts on Horace, as Acron and Porphyryon, was, that it comprehended precepts on the art in general, but that these had been collected from the works of Aristotle, Neoptolemus of Paros, and other Greek critics, and had been strung together by the Latin poet in such a manner as to form a medley of rules, without any systematic plan or arrangement. This notion was adopted by the commentators who flourished after the revival of literature, as Robortellus, Ja-



son de Nores, and the elder Scaliger,<sup>1</sup> who concurred in treating it as a loose, vague, and desultory composition; and this opinion continued to prevail in France as late as the time of Dacier.<sup>2</sup> Others have conceived that the *Ars Poetica* comprises a complete system of poetry, and flatter themselves they can trace in it from beginning to end a regular and connected plan. D. Heinsius stands at the head of this class, and he maintains, that wherever we meet with an apparent confusion or irregularity, it has been occasioned by the licentious transpositions of the copyists. The improbability, however, that such a writer should throw out his precepts at random, and the extreme difficulty, on the other hand, of reducing it to a regular and systematic treatise on poetry, with perfect coherence in all its parts, have induced other critics to believe, either that the *Art of Poetry* contained but fragments of what Horace designed, which was Pope's opinion,<sup>3</sup> or that the author had only an aim at one department of poetry, or class of poets. Of all the theories on this subject, the most celebrated and the most

<sup>1</sup> "De Arte," says Scaliger, "quæris quid sentiam—Quid? Equidem quod de Arte sine arte traditur."—*Poetic. Lib. VI. c. 7.*

<sup>2</sup> Comme il ne travailloit pas à cela de suite, et qu'il ne gardoit d'autre ordre que celui des matières que le hazard lui donnoit à lire et à examiner, il est arrivé de là qu'il n'y a aucune méthode ni aucune liaison de parties dans ce traité, qui même n'a jamais été achevé; Horace n'ayant pas eu le temps d'y mettre la dernière main, ou, ce qui est plus vraisemblable, n'ayant pas voulu s'en donner la peine.

<sup>3</sup> Spence's *Anecdotes*, p. 193.

plausible is that which refers everything to the history and progress of the Roman drama, and its actual condition in the author's time. Lambinus, and Baxter<sup>1</sup> in his edition of Horace, had hinted at this notion which has been fully developed by Hurd, in his excellent commentary and notes on the *Art of Poetry*, where he has shown, that not only the general tenor of the work, but every single precept bears reference to the drama; and that, if examined in this point of view, it will be found to be a regular, well conducted piece, uniformly tending to lay open the state, and remedy the defects of the Roman stage. According to this critic, the subject is divided into three portions: Of these, the first (from verse 1 to 89) is preparatory to the main subject of the epistle,—containing some general rules and reflections on poetry, but principally with a view to the following parts, by which means it serves as an useful introduction to the poet's design, and opens it with that air of ease and negligence essential to the epistolary form. 2d, The main body of the epistle (from verse 89 to 295) is laid out in regulating the Roman stage, and chiefly in giving rules for tragedy, not only as that was the sublimer species of the drama, but, as it should seem, the least cultivated and understood. 3d, The last portion (from verse 295 to the end), exhorts to correctness in writing, and is occupied partly in explaining the causes that prevented it, and partly in directing to the use of

<sup>1</sup> Artem poetiæ comico, hoc est satyrico, stilo conscripsit. Satyra hæc est in sui sæculi poetæ, præcipue vero in Romanum drama.

such means as might serve to promote it. Such is the general plan of the epistle, according to Hurd, who maintains, that in order to enter fully into its scope, it is necessary to trace the poet attentively through all the elegant connexions of his own method.

Sanadon, and a late German critic, M. Engel, have supposed that the great purpose of Horace in his *Ars Poetica* was to ridicule the pretending poets of his age. I certainly do not think that such was his primary object, which would, in some degree, have been in contradiction to the scope of his epistle to Augustus; but this theory may be so far reconciled with the system of Hurd, that, in treating of the degradation of the Roman stage and its causes, Horace no doubt freely censures the love of lucre, the haste of composition, and inattention to critical rules, which disgraced his contemporaries.

Various passages of this work of Horace have been imitated in Vida's *Poeticorum*,—in the Duke of Buckingham's *Essay on Poetry*—in Roscommon, *On Translated Verse*—in Pope's *Essay on Criticism*, and Boileau's *Art Poétique*. The plan, however, of this last production is more closely formed than any of the others on the model of Horace's epistle. Like the first division of the *Ars Poetica*, it commences with some general rules, and introductory principles. The second book touches on elegiac and lyric poetry, which are only cursorily referred to by Horace, but are introduced by him in that part of his epistle which corresponds to this portion of the *Art*



*Poétique.* The third, which is the most important, and by much the longest of the piece, chiefly treats, in the manner of Horace, of dramatic poetry; and the concluding book is formed on the last section of the Epistle to the Pisos,—the author, however, judiciously omitting the description of the frantic bard, and terminating his critical work with a panegyric on his sovereign. Of all the modern Arts of Poetry, Boileau's is the best. It is remarkable for the brevity of its precepts—the exactness of its method—the perspicacity of the remarks,—the propriety of the metaphors; and it proved of the utmost utility to his own nation, in diffusing a just mode of thinking and writing, in banishing every species of false wit, and introducing a pure taste for the simplicity of the ancients.

The critical works of Horace, which, as we have seen, comprise one of his satires, the two epistles of the second book, and the *Ars Poetica*, have generally been considered, especially by critics themselves, as the most valuable part of his productions. Hurd has pronounced them “the best and most exquisite of all his writings;”<sup>1</sup> and of the *Ars Poetica* in particular, he says, “that the learned have long since considered it as a kind of summary of the rules of good writing, to be gotten by heart by every young student, and to whose decisive authority the greatest masters in taste and composition must finally submit.”<sup>2</sup> Mr Gifford, in the introduction to his translation of Juvenal, remarks that, “as an ethical writer, Horace

<sup>1</sup> Vol. II. p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. I. *Introd.*

has not many claims to the esteem of posterity ; but as a critic, he is entitled to all our veneration. Such is the soundness of his judgment, the correctness of his taste, and the extent and variety of his knowledge, that a body of criticism might be selected from his works, more perfect in its kind than anything which antiquity hath bequeathed us." Of course, no person can dispute the correctness or soundness of Horace's judgment ; but he was somewhat of a cold critic, and, from his habits as a satirist, had acquired the Parnassian sneer. He evidently attached more importance to regularity of plan, to correctness and terseness of style, than to originality of genius, or fertility of invention. He admitted no deviation from the strictest propriety. He held in abhorrence everything incongruous or misplaced ; he allowed no pageantry on the stage, and tolerated nothing approaching to the horrible in tragedy, or the farcical in comedy. I am satisfied that he would not have admired Shakespeare ; he would have considered Addison and Pope as much finer poets, and would have included Falstaff, Autolycus, Sir Toby Belch, and all the clowns and boasters of our great dramatist, in the same censure which he bestows on the *Plautinos sales*, and the Mimes of Laberius. Of poetry he talks with no great enthusiasm, at least in his critical works ; of poets in general, he speaks at best with compassion and indulgence ; of his illustrious predecessors in particular, with disparagement and contumely. In his ethical verses, on the other hand, connected as they are with his love of a rural life of tranquillity, freedom, and re-

tirement, there is always something heartfelt and glowing. A few of his speculative notions in morals may be erroneous, but his practical results are full of truth and wisdom. His philosophy, it has been said, gives too much dignity and grace to indolence ; places too much happiness in a passive existence, and is altogether destructive of lofty views. But in the age of Horace, the Roman world had got enough of lofty views, and his sentiments must be estimated not abstractly, but in reference to what was expedient or salutary at the time. After the experience which mankind had suffered, it was not the duty of a moralist to sharpen the dagger of a second Brutus ; and maxims, which might have flourished in the age of Scipio or Epaminondas, would have been misplaced and injurious now. Such virtues, however, as it was yet permitted to exercise, and such as could be practised without danger to the state, are warmly and assiduously inculcated. "Horace," says Dryden, "instructs us how to combat our vices, to regulate our passions, to follow nature, to give bounds to our desires, to distinguish betwixt truth and falsehood, and betwixt our conceptions of things, and things themselves—to come back from our prejudicate opinions, to understand exactly the principles and motives of all our actions, and to avoid the ridicule into which all men necessarily fall, who are intoxicated with those notions which they have received from their masters ; and which they obstinately retain, without examining whether or not they be founded on right reason. In a word, he labours to render us happy in relation to ourselves,



agreeable and faithful to our friends, and discreet, serviceable, and well-bred, in relation to those with whom we are obliged to live and to converse." And though, perhaps, we may not very highly estimate the moral character of the poet himself, yet it cannot be doubted, that, when many of his epistles were penned, his moral sense and feelings must have been of a highly elevated description; for where shall we find remonstrances more just and beautiful, against luxury, envy, and ambition,—against all the pampered pleasures of the body, and all the turbulent passions of the mind? In his satires and epistles to his friends, he successively inculcates cheerfulness in prosperity, and contentment in adversity, independence at court, indifference to wealth, moderation in pleasure, constant preparation for death, and dignity and resignation in life's closing scene.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jouissons, écrivons, aimons, mon cher Horace.  
 Sur le bord de tombeau je mettrai tous mes soins  
 A suivre les leçons de ta philosophie;  
 A mépriser la mort en savourant la vie.  
 Avec toi l'on apprend a souffrir l'indigence,  
 A jouir sagement d'une honnête opulence,  
 Vivre avec soi même, et servir ses amis,  
 Et se moquer un peu de ses sots ennemis;  
 Et sortir d'une vie, ou triste ou fortunée,  
 En rendant grâces aux dieux de nous l'avoir donnée.

*Voltaire,*

THE origin of the Latin Elegy has been already traced in two productions of Catullus—the beautiful poem to Manlius, in which he laments the death of his brother, and that where he celebrates the reception of the locks of Berenice among the stars.<sup>1</sup> The verses, in which he sings his love for Lesbia, are neither of such length nor measure, as to constitute elegiac poems: But they are on the same topics, which in the Augustan age, became the chief subjects of Elegy—pictures of indulgence in illicit love and complaints of the inconstancy of a licentious and venal mistress.

The civil wars and proscriptions which prevailed in Italy from the time of Sylla, till the fixed establishment of the throne of Augustus, had tended to produce a general dissoluteness of manners in the capital of the empire. Uncertainty of property and life has in all ages exercised a pernicious effect on the human character;<sup>2</sup> and scenes of panic and confusion have given scope for the indulgence of vices which would not have existed, or would, at least, have been restrained, in times of tranquillity and subordination.

<sup>1</sup> See, above, Vol. I. p. 472, 473, &c.

<sup>2</sup> *Falstaff*. Well, he is there too, and one Mordake, and a thousand blue caps more: Worcester is stolen away by night; thy father's beard is turned white with the news; you may buy land now as cheap as stinking mackerel.

*Prince Henry*. Then, 'tis like, if there come a hot June, and this civil buffeting hold, we shall buy maidenheads as they buy hobnails, by the hundreds.—*K. Henry IV.* Part 1. act 2. sc. 4.

Excesses of every description were fomented by the extended dominion and accumulated wealth of the Romans, and by their increasing intercourse with the corrupted Oriental nations. The Roman soldiery acquired the vices of the people whom they were employed to subdue, and the Orontes poured its full tide of profligacy into the purer streams of the Tiber.<sup>1</sup>

While the women of this age gained the refinements and accomplishments which foreign manners had introduced among the descendants of the Sabines, they were not exempt from the luxury and corruption which followed in their train.<sup>2</sup> They seem, during this period, to have formed an important part of

<sup>1</sup> Jam pridem Syrus in Tiberim defluxit Orontes ;  
Et linguam, et mores, et cum tibicine chordas  
Obliquas, nec non gentilia tympana secum  
Vexit, et ad Circum jussas prostare puellas.

Juvenal, *Sat.* III.

<sup>2</sup> The best illustration of this may be found in one of the elegies of Propertius—

Quæritis, unde avidis nox sit pretiosa puellis,  
Et Venere exhaustæ damna querantur opes ?  
Certa quidem tantis causa est manifesta ruinis ;  
Luxuriæ nimium libera facta via est.  
Inda cavis aurum mittit formica metallis,  
Et venit e rubro concha Erycina salo ;  
Et Tyrus ostrinos præbet Cadmea colores,  
Cinnamon et multi pastor odoris Arabs.  
Hæc etiam clausas expugnant arma pudicas,  
Quæque terunt fastus, Icarioni, tuos.  
Matrona incedit census induta nepotum,  
Et spolia opprobrii nostra per ora trahit.  
Nulla est poscendi, nulla est reverentia dandi :  
Aut, si qua est, pretio tollitur ista mora.

Lib. III. El. 11.



general society, and to have been under little restraint in their intercourse with their admirers.

From the earliest ages of Rome, a husband possessed the privilege of divorce, for various reasons besides that of his partner having violated her conjugal fidelity; but the right was little exercised for five hundred years from the building of the city, about which time Carvilius repudiated his wife for sterility. Subsequently, however, to that period, divorces had multiplied to such an extent, on the most frivolous pretences, that the practice, from its frequency, at length ceased to be attended with shame or scandal to either party; and statesmen, philosophers, and moralists, scrupled not to take advantage of the license whenever it suited their inclination or convenience.<sup>1</sup> Where the desire of separation existed, a reason for it never was wanting: "Passion, interest, or caprice, suggested daily motives for the dissolution of marriage; a word, a sign, a message, a letter, the mandate of a freedman, declared the separation; the most tender of human connexions was degraded to a transient society of profit or pleasure. According to the various conditions of life, both sexes alternately felt the disgrace and injury—a once beautiful virgin was dismissed to the world, old, indigent, and friendless; or an inconstant spouse transferred her wealth to a new family, abandoning a numerous, perhaps a spurious progeny,

<sup>1</sup> Bankes, *Civil and Constitutional History of Rome*, Vol. II. p. 285.

to the paternal authority and care of her late husband.”<sup>1</sup> The reluctance of the Romans to receive a law proposed by the emperor, which tended to promote marriage, and to render its ties more permanent, sufficiently marks the state of morals, and the nature of the prevailing institutions. His subjects had patiently resigned all political liberty; but they defended the freedom of domestic life. “A law,” says Gibbon, “which enforced the obligation and strengthened the bonds of marriage, was clamorously rejected; and Propertius, in the arms of Delia, applauded the victory of licentious love.”<sup>2</sup> The head of the empire himself, while affecting the character of a moral censor and legislator, successively repudiated Servilia, Clodia, and Scribonia; his Empress Livia was the divorced wife of Tiberius Nero; and he continued during his whole reign to sanction divorces in his own family for reasons merely political.

This unlimited power and frequency of divorce, and the venality of the fair, rendered the most illicit intercourse so common, that it became the chief subject of poetic composition, and the favours conferred on their lovers by Delia, Cynthia, and Corinna, were unblush-

<sup>1</sup> Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, c. 44.

<sup>2</sup> *Decline and Fall*, &c, c. 44.—It should have been Cynthia. Delia was the mistress of Tibullus, not of Propertius. The elegy of Propertius, alluded to by Gibbon, begins—

Gavisa es certe sublatam, Cynthia, legem,  
Quâ quondam edictâ flemus uterque diu,  
Ni nos divideret, &c.—

Lib. II. el. 6.

ingly celebrated and proclaimed by Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid.

Of these Elegiac poets,

## TIBULLUS

is the earliest and most admired. But though unquestionably the first in point of time, there has long existed a considerable doubt and discussion with regard to the year of his birth. Petrus Crinitus, and Lylius Gyraldus, the ancient but inaccurate biographers of the Roman poets, relying on two lines erroneously ascribed to Tibullus, and inserted in the fifth elegy of the third book—

Natalem nostri primum videre parentes

Quum cecidit fato consul uterque pari,

had maintained that he was born in the year of the city 711, in which season the two consuls, Hirtius and Pansa, were mortally wounded at the battle of Modena. Joseph Scaliger was the first commentator who suspected that these verses were interpolated; and his opinion has been confirmed by Janus Dousa, who has shown at great length, that the chronology they would establish, could by no means be reconciled with dates, which must be assigned to various events in the life of the poet. Thus, it is ascertained, that Messala commanded and triumphed in a campaign in Aquitaine, in the year 724 or 725; and Tibullus, in one of his Elegies,<sup>1</sup> speaks of himself as having accom-

<sup>1</sup> Lib. I. el. 7. ed. Vulp. el. 8. ed. Broukhus.



panied his patron Messala, in that expedition, and shared largely in the glory of victories, to which, if he was only thirteen or fourteen years of age at the time, it is scarcely probable that he could have in any degree contributed. Tibullus also fell sick at Corcyra, on his voyage with Messala to Syria, which was undertaken, at the latest, in 726; and it appears, from the Elegy which he composed on that occasion, that he had been for some time the favoured lover of Delia. The Elegy itself is one of his most perfect compositions; and his precocity is unexampled, if, before reaching the age of sixteen, he had earned all these triumphs in war, and love, and poetry. Besides, if Tibullus was born in 711, he would have been precisely the age of Ovid, who unquestionably came into the world in that year: But Ovid invariably talks of Tibullus as a more ancient writer and older man than himself, particularly in that passage in which he so precisely fixes the order of succession of the Elegiac poets,—

Virgilium vidi tantum : nec avara Tibullo  
 Tempus amicitiae fata dedêre meae :  
 Successor fuit hic tibi, Galle—Propertius illi ;  
 Quartus ab his serie temporis ipse fui.  
 Utque ego majores, sic me coluere minores.<sup>1</sup>

Horace too, who was born in the year 689, speaks of Tibullus as a contemporary, or at least addresses him in a style which he would not have employed to-

<sup>1</sup> *Tristia*, Lib. IV. el. 10.

wards one who was twenty years younger than himself,—

Albi, nostrorum sermonum candide iudex.

For all these reasons, it was conjectured by Dousa, that the line which had occasioned the common error with regard to the birth of Tibullus, was interpolated in his elegies, having been extracted from the works of Ovid, in whose *Tristia*<sup>1</sup> it occurs.<sup>2</sup> Dousa was followed by Broukhusius and Vulpius, who all seem right in placing the birth of Tibullus earlier than 711. But I do not think they have adduced sufficient authority for carrying it quite so far back as 690, which they have fixed on as the epoch of his birth. It appears from an epigram of Domitius Marsus, a contemporary of Tibullus, that he ceased to live about the same time with Virgil. But Virgil died in 734, and had Tibullus been born so early as 690, he must have reached the age of forty-four at the time of his decease, which is scarcely consistent with the premature death deplored by his contemporaries, or the epithet *Juvenis*, applied to him in this very epigram of Domitius Marsus.<sup>3</sup> On the whole, his birth may be safely enough conjectured to have occurred between the years 695 and 700.

<sup>1</sup> *Tristia*, Lib. IV. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Dousa, *Schediasma Succidaneum*.

<sup>3</sup> Te quoque Virgilio comitem non æqua, Tibulle,  
Mors juvenem campos misit ad Elysios :  
Ne foret, aut Elegis molles qui fleret amores,  
Aut caneret forti regia bella pede.

It has been remarked, that few of the great Latin poets, orators, or historians, were born at Rome, and that, if the capital had always confined the distinction of Romans to the ancient families within the walls, her name would have been deprived of some of its noblest ornaments.<sup>1</sup> Tibullus, however, is one of the exceptions, as his birth, in whatever year it may have happened, unquestionably took place in the capital. He was descended of an equestrian family, of considerable wealth and possessions,<sup>2</sup> though little known or mentioned in the history of their country. His father had been engaged on the side of Pompey in the civil wars, and died soon after Cæsar had finally triumphed over the liberties of Rome. It is said,<sup>3</sup> but without any sufficient authority, that Tibullus himself was present at Philippi along with his friend Messala, in the ranks of the Republican army. He retired in early life to his paternal villa near Pedum,<sup>4</sup> (now Zagarola,) a town in the ancient Latian territory, and only a few miles distant from Præneste. In his youth he had tasted the sweets of affluence and fortune,<sup>5</sup> but the ample patrimony, which he inherit-

<sup>1</sup> Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, &c. c. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Non ego divitias patrum fructusque requiro.

Lib. I. el. 1.

Nam mihi cum magnis opibus domus alta niteret.

Lib. IV. *Panegy. ad Messalam.*

<sup>3</sup> Grainger's *Tibullus*—Berwick's *Life of Messala Corvinus*.

<sup>4</sup> Quid nunc te dicam facere in regione Pedanâ ?

Horat.

<sup>5</sup> Nam mihi quum magnis opibus domus alta niteret,

Cui fuerant flavi ditantes ordine sulci



ed from his ancestors, was greatly diminished by the partitions of land made to the soldiery of the Triumvirs.<sup>1</sup>

Dacier and other French critics have alleged, that he was ruined by his own dissipation and extravagance, which has been denied by Vulpius and Broukhusius, the learned editors and commentators of Tibullus, with the same eagerness as if their own fame and fortune had depended on the question. The partition of the lands in Italy was probably the chief cause of his indigence ; but I think it not unlikely, that his own extravagance may have contributed to his early difficulties. He utters his complaints of the venality of his mistresses and favourites in terms which show that he had already suffered from their rapacity. Nevertheless, he expresses himself as if prepared to part with everything to gratify their cupidity.<sup>2</sup>

It seems probable, that no part of the land, of which Tibullus had been deprived, was restored to him, as we find not in his elegies a single expression of gratitude or compliment, from which it might be

Horrea, fœcundas ad deficientia messes ;  
Cuique pecus denso pascebant agmine colles,  
Et domino satis, et nimium furique, lupoque ;  
Nunc desiderium superest : nam cura novatur,  
Quum memor anteactos semper dolor admovent annos.

Lib. IV. *Panegy. ad Messalam.*

<sup>1</sup> Vos quoque felices quondam, nunc pauperis agri  
Custodes, fertis munera vestra, Lares.

Lib. I. el. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. II. el. 4.

conjectured that Augustus had atoned to him for the wrongs of Octavius. It is evident, however, that he was not reduced to extreme want. Tibullus himself complains indeed of poverty, but the poverty of the Latin poets is pretty well defined by Broukhusius, "Fortuna mediocris cui nihil deest," and nearly the same notion of it is communicated to us by Tibullus in his first elegy :—

Me mea paupertas vitæ traducat inerti,  
 Dum meus assiduo luceat igne focus :  
 Nec Spes destituat, sed frugum semper acervos  
 Præbeat, et pleno pinguis musta lacu.

It might even be inferred from a distich in a subsequent elegy, that his chief paternal seat had been preserved to him,<sup>1</sup> and Horace, in a complimentary epistle, written long after the partition of the lands, says, that the gods had bestowed on him wealth, and the art of enjoying it—

Di tibi divitias dederunt artemque fruendi.

His own idea of the enjoyment of such wealth as he possessed, seems to have been (judging at least from his poems) a rural life of tranquillity and repose, of which the sole employment should consist in the peaceful avocations of husbandry, and the leisure hours should be devoted to the Muses, or the delights of love. His friendship, however, for Messala, and per-

<sup>1</sup> Quinetiam sedes jubeat si vendere avitas ;

Ite sub imperium, sub titulumque, Lares.

Lib. II. el. 4.

haps some hope of improving his moderate and diminished fortune, induced him to attend that celebrated commander in various military expeditions. It would appear that he had accompanied him in not less than three: But the precise periods at which these were undertaken, and the order in which they succeeded each other, are subjects involved in much uncertainty and contradiction. The first was commenced in 719, against the Salassi, a fierce and warlike people, who inhabited the Pennine or Grecian Alps, and from their fastnesses had long bid defiance to every effort made by a regular army for their subjugation. As they held an important pass between Italy and Gaul, it was thought necessary to dislodge them. Messala set out on the expedition, attended by his friend Tibullus. The lateness of the season rendered it expedient for him to take up his winter quarters among them. But as soon as spring opened, he attacked them with great vigour, surrounded them with impregnable works, and soon compelled them by famine to sue for mercy.<sup>1</sup> For this service Messala was offered the honour of a triumph, which he refused. In the year 723, he accepted of the consulship, and being in consequence appointed to a high command in the fleet, which was destined to act against Antony and Cleopatra, he invited our poet to embark with him in this naval war;<sup>2</sup> but the proposal was declined, and it seems most probable, that his next expedition with Messala, was to Aquitaine.

<sup>1</sup> Berwick, *Lives of Messala*, &c. p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Heyne, Not. 1. ad Lib. I. el. 1.



That province having revolted in 724, Messala was intrusted with the task of reducing it to obedience ;<sup>1</sup> and he proceeded on this service immediately after the battle of Actium. Several sharp actions took place, in which Tibullus signalized his courage ; and the success of the campaign, if we may believe himself, was in no small degree attributable to his courage and exertions.<sup>2</sup> In the following season, Messala, being intrusted by the emperor with an extraordinary command in the East, requested Tibullus to accompany him, and to this proposal our poet, though it would appear with some reluctance, at length consented.<sup>3</sup> He had not, however, been long at sea, when his health suffered so severely, that he was obliged to be put on shore at an island, which Tibullus names by its poetical appellation of Phæacia, but which was then commonly called Corcyra, (now Corfu.) He recovered from this dangerous sickness, and as soon as he was able to renew his voyage, he joined Messala, and travelled with him through Syria, Cilicia, and Egypt.<sup>4</sup> Having returned to Italy, he again retired to his farm at Pedum, where, though he occasionally visited the capital, he chiefly resided during the remainder of his life. Tibullus was endued with elegant manners, and a handsome person, which often procured him the love, though they could not always secure

<sup>1</sup> Appian, Lib. IV.

<sup>2</sup> Non sine me est partus honos, &c.

<sup>3</sup> Lib. I. el. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Broukhusius at least says so, (*Not.* 1, Lib. I. el. 3.) on the authority of some lines in the eighth elegy of the first book ; but they scarcely seem to me to afford sufficient testimony of the fact.

the constancy, of the fair. With Delia, he seems to have been at one time successful, but she forsook him for a husband, or a more favoured lover; and his fortune does not appear to have been sufficient to obtain for him the good graces of the rapacious Nemesis. While he thus bowed at the shrine of beauty, he at the same time drew closer his connexion with the most learned and polite of his countrymen, as Valgius, Macer, and Horace. He continued likewise an uninterrupted friendship with Messala, who was now at the height of his reputation, his house being the resort of the learned, and his patronage the surest passport to the gates of fame. "Messala," says Gibbon, "cultivated every Muse, and was the patron of every man of genius. He spent his evenings in philosophic conversations with Horace, amused his leisure by encouraging the poetical talents of young Ovid, and assumed his place at table between Delia and Tibullus."<sup>1</sup>

Tibullus' enjoyment of this sort of life was considerably impaired by the state of his health, which had continued to be delicate ever since the illness with which he was attacked at Coreyra. His existence was protracted till 734, and his death, which happened in that year, was deplored by Ovid in a long elegiac poem. His mother and sister survived him, as also both his mistresses, Delia and Nemesis, who are represented by Ovid as attending his obsequies,—weeping over his bier, and contending which had possessed the greatest share in his heart. The subject leads

<sup>1</sup> *Decline and Fall of the Rom. Emp.* c. 17.

him to reflections on the inefficacy of human talents and virtues to avoid death, which he illustrates by a beautiful moral allusion to the early fate of Tibullus—

Carminibus *confide* bonis—jacet ecce Tibullus I  
Vix manet e toto parva quod urna capit.<sup>1</sup>

The events and circumstances of the life of Tibullus have exercised a remarkable influence on his writings.<sup>2</sup> Those occurrences to which he was exposed tended to give a peculiar turn to his thoughts, and a peculiar colouring to his language. He fell on the evil days of his country. The Roman fair of the highest rank had become alike licentious and venal; and the property of those ancient possessors of the Italian soil, who had adhered to the republican party, was divided by unprincipled usurpers among their rapacious soldiery. Unhappy in love, and less prosperous in fortune, than in early youth he had reason to anticipate, all that he utters on these topics is stamped with such reality, that no reader can suspect for a moment, either that his complaints were borrowed from Greek sources, or were the mere creations of fancy. His feelings seem to have been too acute to permit him the possession of that perfect repose and equanimity of spirit which he justly accounted the chief blessing of life.

<sup>1</sup> *Amor. Lib. III. el. 9.*

<sup>2</sup> “Ad hoc poetarum genus,” says Spohn, “Tibullus referri debet, cujus carmina cum vitæ rationibus adeo cohærent, ut his demum recte perspectis plane intelligi possent.” *De Au. Tibulli Vitâ et Carminibus Disputatio*, c. 1. Lips. 1819.



That indifference to eminence and wealth, which Horace perhaps enjoyed, and which seems to have been so earnestly desired by Tibullus, was rather pretended by him than actually felt; and his inability to procure either the advantages of fortune or delights of contentment, is the source of constant struggle and disappointment. Hence, the irritability, melancholy, and changeableness of his temper. Such circumstances in the life, and such features in the character, of Tibullus, will, I think, be found explanatory and illustrative of much which we find in his elegies.

These elegies have been divided by German writers into *Erotic*, *Rural*, *Devotional*, and *Panegyrical*. The chief ingredients of his poems are no doubt derived from such topics; but many of his elegies partake of all these qualities, and there are few of them which can be accounted as purely belonging to any of the above classes. The elegies, however, in which amatory sentiments predominate, are by far the most numerous. One of the earliest attachments of Tibullus is commonly said<sup>1</sup> to have been to a maid, called Glycera, for whose inconstancy, Horace, in one of his odes, attempts to console him. But if Tibullus ever expressed his amorous feelings towards her in verse, none of his lines are at present extant. In the first elegy of the first book, which I think by far the most beautiful of his productions, we find him deeply enamoured of Delia, whom he so called from the island of

<sup>1</sup> Grainger's *Tibullus*.—This, however, I think is doubtful; for Horace hints that Glycera had forsaken our poet for a younger lover.

Delos, but whose real name was *Plania*.<sup>1</sup> Broukhusius says she was a freedwoman, which has been denied by other commentators. It is evident, however, that she was not of high rank by birth, from the terms in which our poet alludes to his first introduction to this mistress by her mother.<sup>2</sup> Before she attracted the affections of Tibullus, Delia had a lover who left her for the wars. Her admirer was Caius Sosius, who was prætor when the civil wars broke out, and was afterwards sent by Antony to command in Syria and Cilicia.<sup>3</sup> This expedition commenced in the year 715, and as Tibullus appears to have succeeded to his place in the heart of Delia immediately after his departure, the commencement of our poet's attachment may be fixed about that period, when he was probably twenty years of age. At the time when the first elegy of Tibullus was addressed to her, Delia seems to have been as yet unmarried. In this exquisite production, written on occasion of receiving an invitation from Messala, to accompany him as a prefect of the fleet in the naval war against Antony and Cleopatra, he beautifully expresses his preference of a moderate fortune, and the retirement of a rural life with Delia, to all the honours and splendour to be acquired amid the tumult of arms or intrigues of ambition—

Non ego divitias patrum fructusque requiro,  
Quos tulit antiquo condita messis avo.

<sup>1</sup> Apuleius, in *Apologiâ*. Accusent et Tibullum, quod ei sit *Plania* in animo—*Delia* in versu.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. I. el. 7. ed. Broukhus.

<sup>3</sup> Broukhusius, *not.* ad Lib. I. el. 1. v. 67.

Parva seges satis est ; satis est, requiescere lecto  
Si licet, et solito membra levare toro.  
Quam juvat immites ventos audire cubantem,  
Et Dominam tenero continuisse sinu ;  
Aut, gelidas hibernus aquas quum fuderit Auster,  
Securum somnos, imbre juvante, sequi.  
Hoc mihi contingat : sit dives jure, furorem  
Qui maris, et tristes ferre potest Hyadas.  
Quem labor assiduus vicino terreat hoste :  
Martia cui somnos classica pulsa fugent.  
Jam modo non possum contentus vivere parvo,  
Nec semper longæ deditus esse viæ :  
Sed Canis æstivos ortus vitare sub umbrâ  
Arboris, ad rivos prætereuntis aquæ.  
O quantum est auri potius pereatque smaragdi  
Quam fleat ob nostras ulla puella vias.  
Te bellare decet terrâ, Messala, marique,  
Ut domus hostiles præferat exuvias.  
Me retinent vinctum formosæ vincla puellæ :  
Et sedeo duras janitor ante fores.  
Non ego laudari curo, mea Delia, tecum  
Dum modo sim, quæso segnis inersque vocer.  
Ipse boves, modo sim tecum, mea Delia, possim  
Jungere, et in solo pascere monte pecus.  
Et, te dum liceat teneris retinere lacertis,  
Mollis in incultâ sit mihi somnus humo.  
Quid Tyrio recubare toro sine amore secundo  
Prodest, quum fletu nox vigilanda venit ?  
Nam neque tum plumæ, nec stragula picta soporem,  
Nec sonitus placidæ ducere posset aquæ.  
Ferreus ille fuit, qui, te cum posset habere,  
Maluerit prædas stultus, et arma sequi :  
Ille licet Cilicum vinctas agat ante catervas,  
Ponat et in capto Martia castra solo ;  
Totus et argento contextus, totus et auro  
Insideat celeri conspiciendus equo.  
Te spectem, suprema mihi quum venerit hora :  
Te teneam moriens deficiente manu.



In the third elegy, which, in order of time, appears to have been composed before the second, Tibullus expresses the same tender sentiments for his mistress. It was written during the struggles of that dangerous malady which detained him at Corcyra, in the course of his voyage with Messala to the East. He paints himself in this elegy as in the arms of death—he beholds in imagination the last funeral ceremonies—he writes the epitaph to be inscribed on his tombstone, and follows his soul in its flight to Elysium—

*Hic jacet immiti consumtus morte Tibullus,  
 Messalam terrâ dum sequiturque mari.  
 Sed me, quod facilis tenero sum semper amori,  
 Ipsa Venus campos ducet in Elysios.  
 Hic Choreæ cantusque vigent, passimque vagantes  
 Dulce sonant tenui gutture carmen aves.  
 Fert casiam non culta seges, totosque per agros  
 Floret odoratis terra benigna rosis.  
 Hic juvenum series teneris immista puellis  
 Ludit, et assidue prælia miscet Amor.  
 Illic est cuicumque rapax mors venit amanti,  
 Et gerit insigni myrtea sarta coma.*

In the remaining elegies concerning Delia, she is represented as married ; and it is generally said that she had been united to a freedman during the absence of her lover on his Eastern expedition. The gross liberty which Tibullus uses in disclosing his intrigue to her husband, might induce us to think that he could not be a person of any distinction or respectability ; but it appears, from several passages in the elegies, that he was at least wealthy.<sup>1</sup> The connexion which Delia

<sup>1</sup> Lib. I. 7.

had thus formed, whether from inconstancy or a discovery that Tibullus had no intention of uniting himself to her by a legitimate tie, has little effect in abating his passion. He now bitterly complains of being excluded from her house, and execrates those gates which debarred his access.<sup>1</sup> Being totally forbidden her presence, he boasts that he could obey her injunctions without pain; but he is speedily convinced of his error; and, to reinstate himself in the favour of Delia, he paints the restless anxiety which he felt when she was sick, the fond expectations which he once entertained of passing with her his whole life in rural innocence, and the bitter grief which he felt at the disappointment of his fondest wishes—

At mihi felicem vitam, si salva fuisses,  
 Fingebam demens, sed renuente Deo.  
 Rura colam, frugumque aderit mea Delia custos,  
 Area dum messes sole calente teret.  
 Aut mihi servabit plenis in lintribus uvas,  
 Pressaque veloci pinguis musta pede.  
 Consuescet numerare pecus, consuescet amantis  
 Garrulus in dominæ ludere verna sinu.  
 Illa Deo sciet agricolæ pro vitibus uvam,  
 Pro segete spicas, pro grege ferre dapem.  
 Illa regat cunctos, illi sint omnia curæ,  
 Et juvet in totâ me nihil esse domo.  
 Huc veniet Messala meus, cui dulcia poma  
 Delia selectis detrahet arboribus.  
 Et tantum venerata virum, hunc sedula curet:  
 Huic paret, atque epulas ipsa ministra gerat.  
 Hæc mihi fingebam, quæ nunc Eurusque Notusque  
 Jactat odoratos vota per Armenios.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lib. I. el. 2.<sup>2</sup> Lib. I. el. 5.

Tibullus, however, was doomed to experience a yet severer mortification than the marriage of his mistress. Alike unfaithful to Tibullus and her husband, Delia sacrificed them both to a gallant, whose only recommendation was his superior wealth. Tibullus in vain seeks consolation in wine and desultory amours; but finding he could neither possess the affections of Delia, nor be happy without them, he is hurried on by jealousy and grief to impart to the husband the whole secret of his own intimacy; he communicates, likewise, his suspicions of her attachment to a new lover, and proposes to him that he should be received into his family as a spy on the actions of his wife—

Denique ab incauto nimium petit ille marito,  
Se quoque uti servet, peccet ut illa minus.<sup>1</sup>

This disclosure, as was to have been expected, formed the termination of his intercourse with Delia, and the poem which contained it, is properly made the last of the elegies which celebrate his love for that faithless beauty.

Accordingly, we find, in the second book, that his affections and complaints are transferred to Nemesis. With Delia it would appear, that our poet, whatever reason he may have had to complain of her inconstancy, had been at one time successful. But the affections of Nemesis, he seems hardly ever to have possessed, and the elegies concerning her, of consequence, present one continual strain of complaint prompted by the stings of neglect, and jealousy, and ungratified

<sup>1</sup> Ovid, *Tristia*, Lib. II. v. 457.



passion. In the first elegy on the subject of this new attachment, addressed to his friend Cornutus, he laments the departure of Nemesis, who had gone from Rome to her villa, in the country. As her stay was to be long protracted, and he felt her absence insupportable, he resolved to follow her, in the disguise of a peasant, that he might obtain employment in her fields; and he justifies this measure by the example of Apollo, who, in similar circumstances, descended from Heaven to become the shepherd of Admetus.<sup>1</sup> He next discovers that his mistress is completely venal, and that gold alone can open up a path to her affections.<sup>2</sup> He resolves, however, to gain wealth by any sacrifice of his ease and comfort; but his disinclination for the effort is such, that he concludes with bitter imprecations on those who first discovered the precious metals, which are the excitement to avarice, and on all those who yield to their baneful influence. In the concluding elegy on the subject of his passion for Nemesis, he continues his resolution of engaging in every enterprise which could procure wealth and luxury for his venal mistress:—

*Heu heu divitibus video gaudere puellas.*

*Jam veniant prædæ, si Venus optat opes :*

*Ut mea luxuriâ Nemesis fluat; utque per Urbem*

*Incedat donis conspicienda meis.*

*Illa gerat vestes tenues, quas femina Coa*

*Texuit, auratas disposuitque vias :*

*Illi sint comites fuscî, quos India torret,*

*Solis et admotis inficit ignis equis.*

<sup>1</sup> Lib. II. el. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. II. el. 6.

Illi selectos certent præbere colores,  
Africa puniceum, purpureumque Tyros.

These verses have been thus beautifully imitated by Hammond :—

But if such toys can win her lovely smile,  
Hers be the wealth of Tagus' golden sand,  
Hers the bright gems that glow in India's soil,  
Hers the black sons of Afric's sultry land.  
To please her eye let every loom contend ;  
For her be rifled ocean's pearly bed—  
But where, alas ! would idle fancy tend,  
And soothe with dreams a youthful poet's head ?

The third book of elegies is chiefly occupied with the poet's unfortunate passion for Neæra. Her, it would appear, he wished to marry ; and had, indeed, been actually betrothed, but he had been forsaken on the eve of the nuptials. As in these elegies he sometimes assumes the fictitious name of Lygdamus, and as Ovid, who had anxiously informed himself of every curious particular connected with the life of Tibullus, does not mention Neæra among his mistresses, it has been conjectured that she was an imaginary personage, or at least, had never inspired Tibullus himself with a real passion such as he felt for Nemesis and Delia.<sup>1</sup> His lamentations, however, for the infidelity of Neæra, seem to flow as much from the heart as those for the

<sup>1</sup> Vulpius *De Vitâ Tibulli*, p. XIX. Huschkius, ed. Tibull. This opinion has been successfully refuted by Spohn, as also the notion entertained by Voss, the German translator of Tibullus, that a poet of the name of Lygdamus, and not Tibullus, was the author of the elegies of the third book.—(*De Tibulli Vitâ*, &c. *disput.* c. 4.)

inconstancy of Delia, or the hard-hearted venality of Nemesis. All his endeavours having proved vain to fix the affections of Neæra, Tibullus, in the last of his Erotic elegies, seeks, by advice of his friends, relief in wine. He begins his elegy with an address to Bacchus, in the full confidence that the god will relieve him from his amorous inquietude. The elegy is a continued struggle between the powers of wine and love. It is highly characteristic of those changes of sensibility and passion to which the poet was subject, and presents a striking picture of amorous agitation. Now exhorting himself to enjoyment, and now relapsing into melancholy, we see him, as it were, seated with his guests, seeking to drown his love in jollity, and intensely feeling at intervals that his efforts were vain. It will have been remarked, that Tibullus was forsaken by two of the mistresses whom he celebrated in verse, and that he never obtained the affections of the third. Hence his heart was always ready to pour forth elegiac wailings, and some degree of sadness mingles among his most joyful emotions. Those who feel as acutely as Tibullus,—who live, like him, in an ideal world,—and indulge in waking dreams of perfect felicity or unchanging love, will probably suffer as much as our poet, if they be as little circumspect in their choice. His Delias and Neæras were little fitted to satisfy such a heart. They all equally tormented him by that lightness and mutability, which is inconsistent with exclusive and devoted attachment. They seem to have been all deficient in that fondness for rural retirement, which was a prevailing sentiment



with Tibullus. Hence, the ceaseless storm that agitates the soul of the poet, the dark cloud spread over all his pictures of love, the diversity and rapid change of his sentiments,—fear and hope, pride and passion, satisfaction and despondency, succeeding each other in his mind, like the waves of a tumultuous sea.<sup>1</sup> He condemns and approves, expresses love and hatred, almost in the same breath ; and he passes, in one moment from entreaties to threats, and from threats to supplications :

Quam vellem tecum longas requiescere noctes,  
Et tecum longos pervigilare dies !  
Perfida, nec merito nobis inimica merenti—  
Perfida, sed quamvis perfida, cara tamen.

One can scarcely be a poet and in love, it has been said, without also loving the country. Its scenes supply the sweetest images—there the shepherds have their cool retreats, and love songs have their echoes. Accordingly, the pastoral delineations which occur in the elegies of Tibullus, are closely interwoven with the erotic sentiments ; and there are few indeed of his amorous verses which are not beautified by that reference to rural feelings, which forms the great and characteristic charm of the works of the Latin poets. He draws a picture of the rustic felicity he once fondly anticipated to pass in the society of De-

<sup>1</sup> “ *Modo superbit,*” says Baptista Pius, “ *modo supplicat, annuit, renuit, minatur, intercedit, dedignatur, devovet, orat, instans est, quod voluit non vult, quod optavit refugit, secum diffidens, ut in verâ Cupidinis rotâ illum circumagi credas.*”

lia, in a few lines, exhibiting a most delightful image of a retirement,<sup>1</sup> in which devotion, love, and pastoral occupations, were equally to contribute to the charm of life. Similar in beauty are his delineations of the happiness of a peasant's family, and of the golden age. These pictures do not derive their excellence so much from the grouping of the figures or richness of the colouring, as from the stillness and repose breathed over them. Other passages are equally attractive from the share which the poet takes in the cares of the shepherd and labours of the husbandman. Sometimes he exerts his feeble strength in bearing a mattock. He now plants the vine or gathers its grapes—he then goads on the steer, or recovers a stray lamb, and brings it back to the mother. From his rural solitude he casts a glance on the world, and congratulates himself, that his simple tastes render him contented with his retreat; and if ever hurried amid the tumults of war, he returns with more heartfelt delight to the trees, the flowers, and the thickets, among which the husbandman sacrifices to his rural and domestic gods; and, his offerings having been accepted, enjoys himself in the society of his wife and children. All these touches impress us with a pleasing idea of the gentle and benevolent temper of the poet. “Still, however,” says a German writer,<sup>2</sup> “amid these tranquil enjoyments, we from time to time observe traces of melancholy and disappointment. Even

<sup>1</sup> Lib. I. el. 5.—See above, p. 297.

<sup>2</sup> *Character der Vornehmsten Dichter aller Nationen.*

when at his farm, and amid his labourers, he seems discontented that he possesses less than he had inherited. Amid the overflowings of his heart on the delights of tranquillity and repose, another and ill-consorted feeling occasionally arises, which reminds him, that all this might have been, and in fact, was more ample before. His frequent mention of his possessions as limited though fruitful—his entreaties to thieves and wolves to spare his little flock—his supplications to the gods not to despise the scanty offerings made from so small a herd, show that the remembrance of his misfortunes was still fresh in his mind, and excited painful emotions in his breast. It might be too much to call his expressions those of complaint, or gloom, or discontent; but they may be compared to those involuntary sighs which sometimes escape from the bosom, and disclose the feelings of the most guarded heart: And it is perhaps a confirmation of this opinion with regard to his secret longing for more ample stores, that Tibullus does not seem, like Horace, merely to have valued the country for its own sake, and in proportion as he is there more independent, and approaches nearer to truth and nature. He prizes it partly for the advantages it bestows: There the grapes were first pressed, and honey first gathered. He also appears to prize a rural life, as a shelter that might defend him from tyranny. The Greek poets, and their imitator Virgil, loved the foliage and the grotto, as screening them from a vertical sun. But Tibullus retires from the tumult of the city to repose, if possible, his mind, after the painful



emotions to which he had been subjected, and to forget the weight of the yoke by which Rome was oppressed and degraded. This feeling naturally led to moral reflections—to tender regrets, and a melancholy remembrance of the past.”

As rural pictures are intermixed, in the elegies of Tibullus, with amatory sentiments and feelings, so his poems which have been classed together as *devotional*, are closely connected with his pastoral verses. They are full of images of rural theology, and it is to the rustic and domestic gods that his devotion is chiefly paid. He renders thanks to these deities for the prosperity of his little farm, or piously prepares a festival to their honour. The first elegy of the second book, supposed by Muretus to contain a description of the Ambarvalia, gives an account of a solemn sacrifice, for the purpose of procuring a blessing on the fields and vineyards. It has already been shown, that the simple rites of ancient Rome were early loaded with foreign superstitions; and accordingly, we find our poet alluding in this elegy to many of the remarkable customs observed in the religious institutions of Greece. First, the sacred silence is proclaimed, in order to restrain the assistants from uttering words of unlucky import. Next follows an address to the gods, to whose honour the festival is dedicated. The holiday being announced, the pure in mind and body are invited to approach with clean hands and vestments, that they may join in the ceremony. The victim is then introduced, going voluntarily to the altar, and attended by a crowd of worshippers crown-

ed with garlands, which had been plucked from a tree sacred to the rustic deities. After this follows the prayer for blessings on the husbandman and his fields. At length the sacrifice is offered up, and, lucky omens appearing, the votaries are encouraged to indulge in joy and festivity. The whole is closed by the sacred hymn celebrating the honours of the rural divinities, and recounting the various gifts, and blessings which they have conferred on the country.

His *panegyrics* on his friends form the least pleasing, and least valuable part of the writings of Tibullus. This subject was not suited to the elegiac strain, or to the soft and tender genius of the poet. When he assumes the tone of familiar friendship, as in the poems on the birth days of Messala, and of his friend Cornutus, his compliments are easy and graceful. But his long and laboured panegyric on Messala, in the fourth book, written on occasion of his patron obtaining the consulship, shows how little he was qualified to excel in this species of composition.<sup>1</sup> His allusions in this poem are pedantic, his sentiments trivial, his language flat and spiritless. Every line is appa-

<sup>1</sup> The panegyric on Messala was found in all the ancient MSS. of Tibullus; and Barthius was the first commentator who called its authenticity in question.

Spohn (*De Tibulli Vita, &c. Disput.*) thinks the panegyric on Messala spurious; but he gives no reason for this opinion, except its great inferiority to the other poems of Tibullus, which may be explained, from its being of a different strain from those elegiac compositions in which he so much excelled. Bach has entered more fully into the question, in his *Epist. Crit. in Tibullum et Pseudo-Tibullum*.

rently produced with effort, yet scarcely a verse rises to a tone suited to the celebration of the exploits and triumphs of Messala. In the opening of the poem he apologizes for his want of genius, to render sufficient justice to the actions of his patron. He but shortly notices the glory which the new Consul derived from the honours of a long line of ancestors, since his fame, instead of resting on the unsubstantial lustre of transmitted titles, or the cold inscription on the base of a lifeless statue, deserved to be immortalized by the pens of poets and historians. He then compares Messala with the heroes and sages of antiquity; and the mention of Ulysses leads to a digression on the adventures of that chief, and a sort of abridgement of the *Odyssey*, which occupies nearly a fourth of the whole poem. When he returns to his proper subject, he celebrates Messala's exploits against the Salassi, and his expedition to Aquitaine; and having at length paid every tribute to his warlike talents, he closes his panegyric with the expression of the warmest feelings of the friend as well as the admirer—

Non te deficient nostræ memorare Camœnæ ;  
 Nec tibi Pierii solùm tribuentur honores :  
 Pro te vel rapidas ausim maris ire per undas,  
 Adversis hiberna licet tumeant freta ventis :  
 Pro te vel solus densis subsistere turmis,  
 Vel providum Ætnææ corpus committere flammæ,  
 Sum quodcumque, tuum est.—

On the whole, the panegyric on Messala must be considered as a feeble effort, and sufficiently convinces us that its author would not have excelled in the high



and heroic paths of poetry. The compositions evidently most adapted to the genius of Tibullus, are poems not merely written in elegiac verse, but which answer to our understanding of the word *Elegy*, in the subject and sentiments. The tone of complaint best accords with his soul. Like the nightingale, his most mournful notes are his sweetest, and melancholy feelings are those which he expresses most frequently, as well as with most truth and beauty. He seems naturally to have been possessed of extreme sensibility; and at that period of life when the mind lays in its store of ideas for the future voyage, he had been subjected to much suffering and disappointment. Hence, though his fortune afterwards improved, he had acquired the habit of viewing objects as surrounded with a continual gloom.—

Nunc et amara dies, et noctis amarior umbra est;

Omnia jam tristi tempora felle madent.<sup>1</sup>

No other poet so often introduces the dismal images of death. Tibullus does not, like Anacreon or Catullus, present them for a moment, or in the back-ground of his pictures of joy, but exhibits them at full length, and on the front of the canvass. When he thinks of death, he thinks so profoundly, and so long contemplates its image, that the ideas it suggests must have occupied a large space in his soul. He seems literally to have followed the injunction given him by his friend Horace,—

Omnem crede diem tibi diluxisse supremum.

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<sup>1</sup> Lib. II. el. 4.

He does not make a short abode in the grave, or cast on it a glance from afar. He often fancies himself fluttering in the pangs of death; or figures himself stretched on the funeral pile.<sup>1</sup> Næara and his mother, with dishevelled hair, call on his name for the last time. In imagination he beholds them gather his bones, sprinkle them with milk and wine, moisten them with frankincense, and engrave, in a few lines, the causes of his death on his tombstone. Again, when in sickness, he requests his friends not to forget him amid their pleasures, but to aid him in appeasing Pluto with offerings and sacrifices. He recalls to remembrance everything in which he may have offended the gods—implores their forgiveness, and pours forth the most earnest and affecting supplications that they should spare his tender years:—

Et nondum cani nigros læsere capillos,  
 Nec venit tardo curva senecta pede.  
 Quid fraudare juvat vitem cœscentibus uvis,  
 Et modo nata mala vellere poma manu?  
 Parcite, pallentes undas quicunque tenetis,  
 Duraque sortiti tertia regna dei.  
 Elysios olim liceat cognoscere campos,  
 Letheamque ratem, Cimmeriosque lacus,  
 Quum mea rugosâ pallebunt ora senectâ,  
 Et referam pueris tempora prisca senex.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Lib. III. el. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. III. el. 5.—These lines have been thus happily imitated by Hammond:—

No stealth of time has thinned my flowing hair,  
 Nor age yet bent me with her iron hand;  
 Ah, why so soon the tender blossom tear,  
 Ere autumn yet the ripened fruit demand?

Even to the most joyous thoughts of Tibullus, some mournful or plaintive sentiment is generally united, and his most gay and smiling figures wear chaplets of cypress on their brows. While deeming himself happy in comparison with the great Messala, because he will pass his life unknown in the arms of Delia, he thus concludes his address to this beloved mistress :—

Te spectem, suprema mihi quum venerit hora :  
Te teneam moriens deficiente manu.<sup>1</sup>

It has already been said, that Tibullus was no imitator of the Greeks, and he is certainly the most original of the Latin poets we have yet met with in the course of our survey. His elegies were the overflowings of his sorrows,—his mistress alone was the muse that inspired him. In the few instances in which he has followed the Greeks, he has imitated them with much good taste, and sometimes even with improvements on the original ; as where he borrows from Sophocles the thought of rain assisting slumber, or from Euripides that of the vengeance which Venus will one day inflict on those who have been indifferent to Love.

If compared with the bards of his own country in the common-places of poetry, such as descriptions of

Ye gods who dwell in gloomy shades below,  
Now slowly tread your melancholy round—  
Now wandering view the baleful rivers flow,  
And musing hearken to their solemn sound :  
O, let me yet enjoy the cheerful day,  
Till many years unheeded o'er me roll !

<sup>1</sup> Lib. I. el. 1.



the golden age—the insufficiency of wealth or grandeur for the attainment of happiness—and the secure tranquillity of a country life, he will not be found beneath the greatest of his contemporaries or predecessors. His picture of the golden age is superior to that of Ovid, and his descriptions of Elysium<sup>1</sup> scarcely inferior to those of Lucretius or Virgil.

It would be endless to enumerate the imitations of Tibullus by subsequent writers. The Roman poets who immediately succeeded him, particularly Ovid, availed themselves freely of his stores. Among the modern Latin poets, the greatest number of imitations are by Joannes Secundus and Hercules Strozzi : But Francesco Maria Molza, whom Roscoe styles the Tibullus of his age, approaches nearest to him in delicacy of sentiment and simplicity of expression. The imitations of the early Italian bards are sufficiently elegant, but in general they have dilated too much on the thoughts of the original. Thus, for example, the distich of Tibullus,

At tibi, qui Venerem docuisti vendere primus,  
Quisquis es, infelix urgeat ossa lapis,

is expanded into the five following lines in the *Aminta* of Tasso :—

O chiunque tu fosti, che insegnasti  
Primo à vender l'amor, sia maladetto  
Il tuo cener sepolto, e l'ossa fredde :  
E non si trovi mai pastore, ò ninfa  
Che lor dica passando, *Abbiate pace.*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lib. I. el. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Act II. scene 1.

La Fare was long considered as the French poet who most nearly resembled Tibullus. Bertin, however, who published elegies in 1782, has been called by the French themselves their Tibullus; and so far as slavishly copying from the Latin poet entitles him to this appellation, he well deserves it. But by far the most numerous and best imitations are by the well-known English elegiac writer Hammond, whose poems were first printed in 1743, a short while after his death, with a commendatory preface from his patron, Lord Chesterfield. There are indeed few of the elegies of Hammond, of which the prototypes may not be found in those of Tibullus. The first of the English poet is an imitation of the fourth elegy of the second book of the Roman bard—

His 2d of 6th of 2d book;  
 His 3d of 4th of 2d;  
 His 4th of 5th of 3d;  
 His 5th of 2d of 1st;  
 His 6th of 7th of 2d;

His 7th of 3d of 2d;  
 His 9th of 2d of 3d;  
 His 11th of 11th of 1st;  
 His 12th of 7th of 3d;

and his thirteenth is an imitation skilfully compounded of the first and fifth elegies of the first book of Tibullus.

There were several circumstances in the situation of Hammond, which had considerable affinity to those in the life of Tibullus. His character was soft and amiable, and he divided his time between pleasure and the muses. Lord Chesterfield was his Messala—he possessed a moderate fortune—he wrote his poems before he was twenty-two—and, like Tibullus, died at an early age. Shiels, in the book which goes by

the name of Cibber's *Lives of the Poets*, informs us, that he was inextinguishably amorous, and his mistress inexorably cruel. His elegies were at one time read and admired ; and a classic scholar will still find much to commend in the ease with which he has transfused the beauties of the original into English, and the skill which he has shown in forming compositions out of its detached and transposed passages. But though deserving of approbation, when regarded merely as translations of Tibullus, it will be universally agreed, if they are to be considered as original poems, that he has erred, by transferring to his elegies, addressed to an English lady, Roman ceremonies and ancient rites, altogether foreign from English manners. Owing to this injudicious adoption of the mythology and allusions of the Latin poet, his verses seldom express a real passion in the language of nature. "The truth is," says Dr Johnson, "these elegies have neither passion, nature, nor manners. Where there is fiction there is no passion. He that describes himself as a shepherd, and his Neera or Delia as a shepherdess, and talks of goats and lambs, feels no passion. He that courts his mistress with Roman imagery, deserves to lose her, for she may, with good reason, suspect his sincerity. Hammond has few sentiments drawn from nature, and few images from modern life. He produces nothing but frigid pedantry." Thus, after threatening his mistress with dying, he asks her, in reference to those funeral rites of the Romans, which were naturally enough introduced by Tibullus—



Wilt thou in tears thy lover's corse attend ;  
 With eyes averted light the solemn pyre,  
 Till all around the doleful flames ascend,  
 Then slowly sinking by degrees expire ?

To soothe the hovering soul, be thine the care,  
 With plaintive cries to lead the mournful band,  
 In sable weeds the golden vase to bear,  
 And cull my ashes with thy trembling hand.

Panchaia's odours be their costly feast,  
 And all the pride of Asia's fragrant year ;  
 Give them the treasures of the farthest East,  
 And, what is still more precious, give thy tear.

More than half the writings of Hammond are rendered in this manner from the Latin ; and had Dr Johnson been aware that these verses were merely translations, (and had they not been edited by Lord Chesterfield,) he would probably, in some degree, have softened his asperity. In a few, but very few instances, Hammond has parodied Tibullus, as in the passage where he applies to his patron, Lord Chesterfield, the elegant compliments paid by the Roman poet to Messala in the first and fifth elegies—

Te bellare decet terrâ, Messala, marique,  
 Ut domus hostiles præferat exuvias.

\* \* \* \* \*

Rura colam, frugumque aderit mea Delia custos,  
 Area dum messes sole calente teret.

\* \* \* \* \*

Huc veniet Messala meus, cui dulcia poma  
 Delia selectis detrahet arboribus :  
 Et tantum venerata virum, hunc sedula curet ;  
 Huic paret, atque epulas ipsa ministra gerat.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Lib. I. el. 5.

The above lines are thus parodied—

Stanhope, in wisdom, as in art divine,  
 May rise and plead Britannia's glorious cause,  
 With steady rein his eager wit confine,  
 While manly sense the deep attention draws.

Let Stanhope speak his listening country's wrongs,  
 My humble voice shall please one partial maid ;  
 For her alone I pen my tender song,  
 Securely sitting in his friendly shade.

Stanhope shall come and grace his rural friend,  
 Delia shall wonder at her noble guest ;  
 With blushing awe the riper fruit commend,  
 And for her husband's patron cull the best.

In some instances, particularly in his imitation of the second elegy, Hammond has improved on his original. In a few, he has rendered the most beautiful and simple thoughts of the Latin poet puerile and ridiculous, by injudicious amplification : Speaking of his rural employments, Tibullus says,

Non agnamve sinu pigeat, fœtumve capellæ  
 Desertum, oblitâ matre, referre domum ;

which distich Hammond thus dilates into four lines :

If late at dusk, while carelessly I roam,  
 I meet a strolling kid or bleating lamb ;  
 Under my arm I'll bring the wanderer home,  
*And not a little chide its thoughtless dam.*

It certainly cannot be denied, that the purest part of modern literature has been formed on classical models, and that English poetry, in particular, has great-

ly benefited by the imitation of the songs of Rome. But the erotic elegy, as well as the amatory pastoral, has perhaps lost somewhat in the true expression of nature and passion, from its authors having too closely adopted the ancient mythology and manners. Love, it has no doubt been said, speaks an universal language, and amatory composition may be less temporary or local than satire and some other kinds of minor poetry. But though the passion may act on the human mind, in all ages, nearly in the same manner, the mode of expressing its emotions must vary according to the usages of the country where it is felt. Hence, a Roman should not altogether have expressed his passion like a Greek, nor a Briton and modern Italian, like an ancient Roman.

SEXTUS AURELIUS PROPERTIUS,

the elegiac writer who first succeeds Tibullus, was born in the district of Umbria,<sup>1</sup> which lay close to the confines of the most ancient Etruria, or Etruria Proper, and at length became part of the extended dominions of the Etruscans. Seven towns of the Umbrian territory dispute with each other the honour of being the birth-place of Propertius. In some

<sup>1</sup> Proxima supposito contingens Umbria campo  
Me genuit, terris fertilis uberibus.

Lib. I. el. 22.

Ut nostris tumefacta superbiat Umbria libris,  
Umbria Romani patria Callimachi.

Lib. IV. el. 1.



lines of the fourth book of his elegies, which are generally, and with good reason, supposed to apply to himself, the poet mentions Mevania, (the modern Bevagna,) in such a manner, as to have induced an opinion that that town was the place of his birth—

Umbria te notis antiqua penatibus edit.  
 Mentior? an patriæ tangitur ora tuæ?  
 Quâ nebulosa cavo rorat Mevania campo,  
 Et lacus æstivis intepet Umber aquis;  
 Scandentisque arcis consurgit vertice murus—  
 Murus ab ingenio notior ille tuo.

In consequence of these lines, the most ancient and prevalent opinion was in favour of the moist Mevania;<sup>1</sup> and I do not see any sufficient reason to depart from it. Scaliger, but on no adequate authority, thinks that Mevania in these verses means the district in which the town was situated, and that Ameria, (now Amelia,) which lies in the immediate vicinity, was the birth-place of Propertius.<sup>2</sup> Perusia, for which Ciattus contends,<sup>3</sup> though certainly in the neighbourhood, was beyond the limits of the Umbrian territory. Barthius and Donnola<sup>4</sup> fixed on Hispellum (now Spello) as having the best title to this contested honour; and Burman considers its

<sup>1</sup> Petrus Crinitus, *De Poetis Latinis*, Lib. III. Fabius degli Alberti—*Nuova Raccolta degli opuscoli Scientif.* T. VII. p. 61. Broukhusii, *Proleg.*

<sup>2</sup> *In notis ad Propert.* Lib. IV. el. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Fel. Ciatti, *Paradox.* *De Patriâ Propert.* Perus. 1628.

<sup>4</sup> *De Patriâ Propertii Dissert.* Fulgin. 1629—Vitemb. 1713.

claim as incontrovertibly settled<sup>1</sup> by the following inscription, discovered, in 1722, in the immediate vicinity of Spello :—" Sext. Aurel. Propert. Sext. F. Lem." These words were inscribed on a tablet, found amid ruins, which are conjectured to be the remains of Propertius' villa; and they perhaps afford some degree of evidence that he lived, or was buried, near the spot; but I cannot perceive that this inscription throws the smallest light on any question whatever with regard to his nativity.

The time, as well as the place, of Propertius' birth has been matter of controversy, being placed by some writers as early as 696,<sup>2</sup> and by others as late as 705.<sup>3</sup> From the import of eight lines in the fourth book of his elegies, which refer to himself, the year of his birth may, I think, be most safely placed between these periods, and no great error will probably be committed if it be fixed in the year 700—

Ossaque legisti, non illâ ætate legenda,  
 Patris, et in tenues cogeris ipse Lares.  
 Nam tua cum multi versarent rura juvenci  
 Abstulit excultas pertica tristis opes.  
 Mox ubi bulla rudi demissa est aurea collo  
 Matris, et ante deos libera sumta toga;  
 Tum tibi pauca suo de carmine dictat Apollo,  
 Et vetat insano verba tonare foro.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Controversiam omnem diremit monumentum insigne tabulæ vetustissimæ, Hispelli in Umbriâ an. 1722 repertum.

<sup>2</sup> Vulpîi *Prolegomena*.

<sup>3</sup> Fuhrmann, *Handbuch der Classischen Literatur—Charactere der Vornehmsten Dichter aller Nationen*.

<sup>4</sup> Lib. IV. el. 1.

In these verses we are told, that his father died prematurely, while Propertius was yet young, and that his inheritance, about the same time, was divided among the soldiery. This partition of lands we know took place in the year 712. Propertius continues to inform us, that a while after, or soon after (*mox*), he laid aside the *Bulla aurea*, an ornament which patrician children wore around their necks, and that he assumed the *Toga libera*, or *virilis*. Now, if we allow three years to the period expressed by the indefinite word *mox*, it follows that Propertius put on the *Toga virilis* in 715. But the Roman youth generally assumed this garb about the age of fifteen or sixteen, so that, counting the years back, the birth of Propertius fixes itself in the year 700. This chronology also perfectly agrees with the lines of Ovid, where it is said that Propertius was younger than Tibullus, who was born about the year 695, but that he was older than Ovid himself, who came into the world in 711.

Propertius was descended of an equestrian family of considerable possessions. But his father having espoused the side of the consul, Lucius Antonius, brother of the Triumvir, in the dissensions that arose with Octavius, he was made prisoner on the capture of Perugia, and slain at the altar erected to the memory of Julius Cæsar.<sup>1</sup> While Propertius was yet

<sup>1</sup> These facts are mentioned by Petrus Crinitus ; but his authority for them is doubtful. He merely says, "Sunt qui scribunt ejus patrem," &c. and they are called in question on very strong grounds by Justus Lipsius, (*Variar. Lectionum*, Lib. III. c. 23. Opera, T. I. p. 60. Antwerp, 1637.)



in his boyhood, the chief part of his inheritance, like that of Tibullus, was divided, as we have seen, among the soldiery of the Triumvirs. With the view of re-establishing his fortune, he went to Rome in early youth, and there commenced those studies which might qualify him to shine as a patron in the Forum. He soon, however, relinquished this pursuit, and devoted himself entirely to the muses. His early proficiency in poetry, his learning and agreeable manners procured for him the friendship of Gallus, of the poet Ponticus Bassus, and of Ovid, who frequently attended the private recital of his elegies.<sup>1</sup>

These productions appear to have been written about the year 730. In the second, third, and fourth books, our poet gives Octavius Cæsar the name of Augustus, which was first bestowed on him in 727. In the third book he alludes to the death of Marcellus, who died in 730. Farther, in the last elegy of the second book, he speaks of Virgil as still alive, and of his *Æneid* as a work which was in progress, and of which the highest expectations had been formed:—

Nescio quid majus nascitur Iliade.

Now, Virgil commenced his *Æneid* in 724, and had made considerable progress in 730, in which year he read three books of it to Augustus, and his sister Octavia. Virgil survived till the year 734, and the *Æneid* was published immediately after his death.

<sup>1</sup> Sæpe suos solitus recitare Propertius ignes,  
Jure sodalitii qui mihi junctus erat.

The first appearance of the elegies attracted the notice of Mæcenas, who assigned Propertius a house in his own gardens on the Esquiline hill.<sup>1</sup> He also procured for him the patronage of Volcatius Tullus, who was consul with Augustus, in the year 721, and became, after the death of Mæcenas, the general protector of learning and the arts. It appears that the patrons of those days teased their dependent poets with pressing solicitations to accompany them on military expeditions and embassies. An invitation of this sort from Tullus, requesting Propertius to attend him to Egypt and Asia Minor, seems to have been declined.<sup>2</sup> But it would appear, that he at length undertook a journey to Athens,<sup>3</sup> probably as a follower of Mæcenas when he attended Augustus in his progress through Greece. Yet, though unwilling to leave Italy, he anticipated much pleasure in reading Plato, Demosthenes, and Menander in their own country.<sup>4</sup> Little farther is known concerning the events of his life, and even the precise period of his death is uncertain. He was alive in 736, when the emperor promulgated a law concerning marriage, by

<sup>1</sup> Harles' *Introduct. in Notitiam Literat. Roman.* T. I. p. 350. Propertius himself tells us that he lived on the Esquiline hill:

I puer, et citus hæc aliquâ propone columnâ;  
Et dominum Esquilis scribe habitare tuum.

But I know not where Harles found that it was in a house given to him by Mæcenas in his own gardens.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. I. el. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Magnum iter ad doctas proficisci cogor Athenas.

Lib. III. el. 20.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

which severe penalties were imposed on celibacy. His death is generally placed about the year 740, when he had not exceeded the age of 40. But there seems no sufficient proof that he died earlier than 760, at which time Ovid, during his banishment in Pontus, wrote an elegy where he speaks of him as deceased :

Invenies eadem blandi praecepta Propertî :

Districtus minimâ nec tamen ille notâ est.

His ego successi, quoniam præstantia candor

Nomina vivorum dissimulare jubet.<sup>1</sup>

The whole life of Propertius was devoted to love. He was first enticed, and in his early youth, by Lycinna, an artful slave.<sup>2</sup> But she was incapable of deeply moving his heart, and though his intercourse with her continued for three years,<sup>3</sup> he does not seem to have considered this attachment as a serious passion, or of such a nature as to prevent him from regarding the love for Cynthia, which was afterwards kindled in his breast, as his earliest flame.<sup>4</sup> The lady whom he has celebrated under the name of Cynthia, was the daughter of the poet Hostius, and her real name was Hostia.<sup>5</sup> She possessed a villa, or, at least, resided much, at Tibur, where our poet frequently visited her :

Nox media, et dominæ mihi venit epistola nostræ :

Tibure me missâ jussit adesse morâ.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Tristia*, Lib. II. v. 465.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. III. el. 13.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis,  
Contactum nullis ante Cupidinibus.

Lib. I. el. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Apuleius, in *Apologiâ*.

<sup>6</sup> Lib. III. el. 14.



At Rome he often experienced much difficulty in procuring access to the mansion in which she resided, and was frequently obliged to obtain it by various stratagems. This fascinating object of his ruling and permanent attachment, had received an education equal to that of the most distinguished Roman ladies of her day. She was skilled in music, poetry, and every other accomplishment calculated to make an impression on a youthful and susceptible mind. But with all these advantages, she shared no small portion of the artifice and extravagance, which characterised the domestic manners of the Roman fair in the age of Augustus, and afforded such copious subjects for the invectives or jests of the satirists. Hence our poet was the constant sport of the varying humours of his mistress, and perhaps of her infidelity. At one period she appears to have been warmly and devotedly attached to him; and Propertius represents her as preferring poverty with him to regal wealth and splendour :

*Ille carus ego : per me carissima Roma*

*Dicitur : et sine me dulcia regna negat.*

*Illa vel angusto mecum requiescere lecto,*

*Et quocunque modo maluit esse mea.<sup>1</sup>*

He was soon, however, supplanted in her affections. His chief rival was a Prætor of Illyria, whom, it would appear, she had intended to accompany to his government.<sup>2</sup> It is probable she had been prevailed on by the entreaties of Propertius to remain in Italy : But the return of this powerful lover from Illyria is first

<sup>1</sup> Lib. I. 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

dreaded and then lamented by our poet, as the death-blow to his hopes.<sup>1</sup> While thus inconstant herself, Cynthia was little disposed to grant the same privilege of infidelity to her lover ; and her various transports of rage and jealousy, which Propertius has very unceremoniously recorded,<sup>2</sup> leave us little room to doubt that she was a woman of ungovernable temper, and, with all her accomplishments, of gross and violent manners when exasperated. Her jealousy might not be altogether without foundation ; but if Propertius did not love her exclusively, she was, at least till her death, (which happened when her lover was about thirty years of age,) his reigning passion, and the chief theme of his elegies.

These productions, which are nearly one hundred in number, are divided into four books. The first book is almost exclusively devoted to the celebration of the poet's love for Cynthia. He paints the powerful influence of this passion on his mind.<sup>3</sup> He expresses his admiration of her beauty on seeing her asleep,<sup>4</sup> his total insensibility to the charms of others,<sup>5</sup> his reluctance to grieve her by embarking on any distant expedition,<sup>6</sup> his anxiety at the prospect of her absence, when she was about to set out on a dangerous voyage,<sup>7</sup> his vexation occasioned by her protracted stay at Baia,<sup>8</sup> and his apprehensions that long absence may have changed her affections :—

Non sum ego qui fueram : mutat via longa puellas.

Quantus in exiguo tempore fugit amor !

<sup>1</sup> Lib. II. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. IV. el. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Lib. I. 1.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* 3.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* 4.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* 6.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* 8.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* 11.

Nunc primum longas solus cognoscere noctes  
 Cogor, et ipse meis auribus esse gravis.  
 Felix qui potuit præsentì flere puellæ :  
 Nonnihil aspersis gaudet Amor lacrimis.<sup>1</sup>  
 Aut si despectus potuit mutare calores,  
 Sunt quoque translato gaudia servitio.  
 Mi neque amare aliam, neque ab hâc discedere fas est.  
 Cynthia prima fuit, Cynthia finis erit.<sup>2</sup>

One of the most beautiful elegies, on the subject of his passion, is that addressed to Tullus, in which he prefers the love of Cynthia to all the luxuries which his patron so abundantly enjoyed :—

Tu licet abjectus Tiberinâ molliter undâ  
 Lesbia Mentoreo vina bibas opere ;  
 Et modo tam celeres mireris currere lintres,  
 Et modo tam tardas funibus ire rates :  
 Et nemus omne satas intendat vertice silvas,  
 Urgetur quantis Caucasus arboribus :  
 Non tamen ista meo valeant contendere amorì ;  
 Nescit Amor magnis cedere divitiis.  
 Nam sive optatam mecum trahit illa quietem,  
 Seu facili totum ducit amore diem—  
 Tum mihi Pactoli veniunt sub tecta liquores,  
 Et legitur rubris gemma sub æquoribus.  
 Tum mihi cessuros spondent mea gaudia reges ;  
 Quæ maneant, dum me fata perire volent.  
 Nam quis divitiis adverso gaudet amore ?<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This line is imitated by Tasso, in his *Aminta*, though with a shade of variation in the meaning :

Pasce l'agna l'herbette, il lupo l'agne ;  
 Ma il crudo amor di lagrime si pasce,  
 Nè se ne mostra mai satollo.

At. 1. sc. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. I. 12.

<sup>3</sup> This has been beautifully imitated by Joannes Secundus, in the second elegy of his first book.



In the second and third books, Cynthia is still the principal theme of the poet, but his strain becomes more moral and didactic. He now declaims against the extravagance of his age, against that love of pomp and luxury, which in his time dishonoured the Roman fair, and which he beautifully contrasts with the simple manners of a distant period—concluding with a pathetic prediction of the fall of Rome, accelerated by its own overgrown wealth, and the pernicious thirst of gold :

Felix agrestum quondam pacata juvenus,  
 Divitiæ quorum messis, et arbor, erant.  
 Illis pompa fuit decussa Cydonia ramo,  
 Et dare puniceis plena canistra rubis :  
 Nunc violas tondere manu, nunc mixta referre  
 Lilia vimineos lucida per calathos :  
 Et portare suis vestitas frondibus uvas,  
 Aut variam plumæ versicoloris avem.

\* \* \* \*

Dique, deæque omnes, quibus est tutela per agros,  
 Præbebant versis verba secunda focis ;  
 At nunc desertis cessant sacraria lucis ;  
 Aurum omnes, victâ jam pietate, colunt.  
 Auro pulsa fides, auro venalia jura :  
 Aurum lex sequitur, mox sine lege pudor.  
 Proloquar, atque utinam patriæ sim vanus aruspex—  
 Frangitur ipsa suis Roma superba bonis.  
 Certa loquor, sed nulla fides——<sup>1</sup>

On another occasion, he adverts to the emptiness of all human pride and pomp, as well as the transitoriness of life—giving at the same time additional effect to his reflections, by uniting his moral remarks with

<sup>1</sup> Lib. III. el. 11.

lamentations for the young Marcellus, who had recently died at Baiae—

Quid genus, aut virtus, aut optima profuit illi  
 Mater, et amplexo Cæsaris esse focos ?  
 Aut modo tam pleno fluitantia vela theatro,  
 Et per maternas omnia gesta manus ?  
 Occidit, et misero steterat vigesimus annus :  
 Tot bona tam parvo clausit in orbe dies.  
 I nunc, tolle animos, et tecum finge triumphos ;  
 Stantiaque in plausum tota theatra juvent.  
 Attalicas supera vestes, atque omnia magnis  
 Gemmea sint ludis : ignibus usta dabis.  
 Sed tamen huc omnes : huc primus, et ultimus ordo :  
 Est mala, sed cunctis ista terenda via.<sup>1</sup>  
 Nirea non facies, non vis exemit Achillem,  
 Cræsum aut Pactoli quas parit humor opes.<sup>1</sup>

The elegies of the fourth book, which were not made public till after the death of the poet, are entirely of a different description from those by which they are preceded. They are chiefly heroical and didactic, comprehending the praises of Augustus, and long narrations drawn from Roman fable and Italian antiquities. Those on the latter topics may perhaps be considered as the origin of that species of composition which has been denominated Local poetry, of which the subject is some particular landscape to be poetically described, with the addition of such embellishments as may be supplied by historical retrospection.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lib. III. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Denham's *Cooper's Hill*, Dyer's *Grongar Hill*, and Pope's *Windsor Forest*, belong to this class of compositions.

In the first elegy of this fourth book, Propertius sings the origin and increase of Rome, and the exploits of its earliest heroes. In the second, he introduces Vertumnus, an ancient Tuscan god, refuting the false opinions entertained concerning him, and unfolding his true descent. He relates, in the fourth, the story of Tarpeia, who betrayed the Capitol to Tatius, king of the Sabines. As told in Roman history, Tarpeia required, for her reward in admitting the Sabine army into the Capitol, what the soldiers wore on their left arms. The traitress alluded to their bracelets ; but they, purposely misinterpreting her meaning, overwhelmed her with their bucklers. Propertius so far departs from this story, that, instead of attributing her conduct to such wretched and unpoetical covetousness, he represents Tarpeia as influenced by a passion for Tatius, the Sabine king. He thus renders her character less despicable ; but the conduct of Tatius becomes in proportion more odious. The ninth elegy contains the story of Hercules, who, having slain the robber Cacus, invades a recess sacred to the nymphs, because they had refused him a draught of water from their fountain to quench his thirst. There is much sweetness in some of these pictures of ancient Italian manners ; and the rustic descriptions of the hills of Rome, ere Rome was built, present images of great pastoral beauty, and which must have been peculiarly striking to a Roman in the age of Augustus—

Hoc quodcunque vides, hospes, quæ maxima Roma est,  
Ante Phrygem Æneam collis et herba fuit :



Atque ubi navali stant sacra palatia Phœbo,  
 Evandri profugæ procubere boves.  
 Fictilibus crevere Deis hæc aurea templa;  
 Nec fuit opprobrio facta sine arte casa—<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

Lucus erat felix hederoso consitus antro,  
 Multaque nativis obstrepit arbor aquis;  
 Silvani ramosa domus, quo dulcis ab æstu  
 Fistula poturas ire jubebat oves.  
 Hunc Tatius fontem vallo præcingit acerno,  
 Fidaque suggesta castra coronat humo.  
 Quid tum Roma fuit, tubicen vicina Curetis,  
 Cùm quateret lento murmure saxa Jovis?  
 Atque ubi nunc terris dicuntur jura subactis,  
 Stabant Romano pila Sabina foro.  
 Murus erant montes: ubi nunc est Curia septa,  
 Bellicus ex illo fonte bibebat equus.<sup>2</sup>

The amenity of these pictures is agreeably varied by the force and spirit of the sixth and tenth elegies, in the former of which the poet proclaims a festival for the victory of Actium, and in the latter celebrates those Roman commanders who had gained the *Spolia opima* from their enemies. The third elegy is the origin of those compositions called *Heroides*, which Ovid subsequently brought to such perfection. It is an epistle addressed by Arethusa to her husband Lycotas, complaining of his absence while he was on a military expedition in the East. Under the names of Arethusa and Lycotas the poet is supposed to design Ælia Galla and her husband Posthumus, who served with Gallus, governor of Egypt, in his campaign against Arabia Felix. The eleventh of this

<sup>1</sup> Lib. IV. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. IV. 4.

book, and last of the whole collection, is called by commentators the Queen of Elegies. Cornelia, the wife of the censor Paullus, and one of the most illustrious of Roman matrons, is represented as standing before the judgment-seat of Minos, and casting a glance at the world she had left behind and its nothingness. She consoles her husband and mother in a few beautiful verses, and exhorts her daughter to persevere in a life of virtue and chastity—

*Hæc est feminei merces extrema triumphæ,  
Laudat ubi emeritum libera fama rogum.*

In point of general composition, the elegies of Propertius are almost perfect. He flourished at a period and in a capital in which style had attained its greatest purity. He lived in the society of Gallus, Ovid, and Mæcenas, and under the sway of a prince, whose greatest boast was the protection of learning and genius. The patronage and society he enjoyed communicated to his writings a degree of taste and politeness, which they might not have attained had he lived at an earlier period, or at a distance from the court of Augustus. Even a slight acquaintance with his works may convince us that he was an extensive reader, and his learning supplied him with such numerous topics of allusion and illustration, that it seduced him into what has justly been considered as his chief fault. Whatever is pleasing or natural in his elegies, he destroys by mixing up with it history and fable. Sometimes he pours forth his ill-timed erudition on the most simple and trivial topics. Is Cynthia asleep—

he compares her to an exhausted Bacchante, to the unconscious Ariadne deserted by Theseus, and to Andromeda when, delivered from the monster, she first yielded to slumber. Does she weep—Niobe never shed so many tears, nor were such bitter drops distilled by Briseis or Andromache, in the first hours of their captivity. Nor can he pay an ordinary compliment to his mistress, except he ransack antiquity for some precedent or case in point. Is she yellow-haired—such was Minerva;—is she tall—such was Ischomache, and the whole race of heroines. This injudicious and ill-timed pedantry pervades almost all the elegies of Propertius, and renders them often fatiguing, perplexing, and obscure.<sup>1</sup> As an example of his manner of overwhelming the sweetest images and most beautiful sentiments, by this load of pedantry and affectation, I shall quote one of his finest productions, in which, when wishing to inspire Cynthia with disdain for luxury and splendour of dress, after some exquisite lines on the unadorned and native beauty of flowers, and shrubs, and shells, he tells her that Phœbe and her sister Hilaira owed not to the splendour of their garments the conquest of the hearts of Castor and Pollux, and that the daughter of the river Evenus was only attired in her native charms, when Apollo contended with Idas for her heart; and so forth to the end of the elegy—

Aspice, quot submittat humus formosa colores,  
Et veniant hederæ sponte sua melius :

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<sup>1</sup> *Mem. de l'Acad. des Inscriptions.*



Surgat et in solis formosius arbutus antris,  
 Et sciat indociles currere lymp̄a vias :  
 Litora nativos per se dent picta lapillos,  
 Et volucres nullâ dulcius arte canant.  
 Non sic Leucippis succendit Castora Phœbe,  
 Pollucem cultu non Hilaira soror.  
 Non Idæ, et cupido quondam discordia Phœbo  
 Eveni patriis filia litoribus.<sup>1</sup>

It may, no doubt, be said, that it is only modern readers who are dissatisfied with these frequent allusions to a history and mythology, to which they are strangers ; and that the contemporaries of Propertius, who were familiar with his fables, would be delighted to have such fascinating stories recalled to their recollection. But, I think, that even a priest of Jupiter, or Apollo, must have felt that his mythological learning often hurried him improperly away from his subject, and that the mind was linked by chains of fables, till the beauty and inconstancy of Cynthia were alike forgotten.

The adoption of this style of writing, (which, in some elegies, almost reminds us of Rust's courtship of Juliet, in the farce of *The Patron*,<sup>2</sup>) must in a great measure be attributed to Propertius' study and imitation

<sup>1</sup> Lib. I. el. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Rust*. Had you been on Mount Ida, when Paris decided the contest, the Cyprian Queen had pleaded for the pippin in vain.

*Juliet*. Extravagant gallantry !

*Rust*. In you, madam, are concentrated all the beauties of the heathen mythology, the open front of Diana, the lustre of Pallas's eyes, the chromatic music of Clio, the blooming graces of Hebe, the imperial port of Queen Juno, with the delicate dimples of Venus.

of the Greek authors. I have formerly said, that the Latin poets wrote best when they most closely imitated the Greeks ; but this maxim applies only to those Romans, who, like Plautus, Terence, and Horace, adored the steps of the ancient bards of Ionia, Athens, or Thebes ; for those who fell into the perverted taste of the Alexandrian school, perplex us with obscure fable, or overwhelm us with clumsy erudition. A similarity of circumstances in the condition of Rome and Alexandria rendered an imitation of the poets who had flourished in the Egyptian capital more prevalent during the Augustan age than it had been in the time of the republic. Both cities were placed under monarchical governments, which were, indeed, almost despotic, but under which literature and science were protected. Immense libraries were opened for the studies of the learned, and splendid courts were the centres of attraction to poets. Both cities enjoyed stability of government, security of life and property for their inhabitants, and a general tranquillity, which were equally remote from the tumultuous scenes of the Roman republic, in the days of Sylla, and those of Athenian democracy, in the age of Pericles.<sup>1</sup> None of the Latin poets had so sedulously studied the Alexandrian writers, or so closely formed on them their style and sentiments as Propertius. The great objects of his imitation were Callimachus and Philetas. The former, who flourished under Ptolemy Philadelphus, and from whom Catullus translated the *Coma Berenices*, is still remembered as a

<sup>1</sup> Weichert, *Comment. de Versu Poet. Epic. Hypermetro*, 1819.

poet who overloaded his verses with superfluous ornaments, remote allusions, and dark fables; seeking to supply the want of genius or fancy, by the aid of research and memory.<sup>1</sup> Little is ascertained concerning Philetas, but as we know that he was the preceptor of Ptolemy Philadelphus, and afterwards frequented his court at the same time with Callimachus—that he was distinguished as a grammarian and Polyhistor, and occupied himself with philosophic speculations, we can scarcely doubt that his art, like that of his contemporaries, exceeded his genius. The highest ambition of Propertius was to emulate these learned erotic poets. He calls himself with exultation the Roman Callimachus;<sup>2</sup> and he could hardly have expressed the value which he set on the writings of Philetas in stronger terms than by telling us, that when he intended to sing in heroic verse the triumphs of Augustus, he was forbidden by Apollo, to attempt a strain, in which he was not likely to succeed, and that the god sent the Muse Calliope, who instructed him concerning the subjects he should choose,

————— lymphisque a fonte petitis,  
Ora Phileteâ nostra rigavit aquâ.<sup>3</sup>

In this respect, Propertius is totally different from Tibullus, with whom he has been so frequently compared. The writings of Tibullus breathe a native

<sup>1</sup> "Propertius," says J. C. Ernesti, "quum Alexandrinos poëtas, Callimachum maxime et Philetam, sequeretur, elegias, castum et verecundum genus, omni illorum tumore, argutiis, fuco, et operoso ornatu oneravit."

<sup>2</sup> Lib. IV. el. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Lib. III. el. 2.



freshness, a simplicity and purity which is remarkably contrasted with the profusion of obscure mythological fables, by which the elegies of Propertius are entangled and darkened. Propertius himself tacitly admits, that his predecessor was an original writer, and no imitator of the Greeks :

*Primus ego ingredior puro de fonte sacerdos,  
Italia per Grajos orgia ferre choros.*<sup>1</sup>

In consequence of this learned imitation of the Greeks, there is an appearance of labour and display, in most of the elegies of Propertius, and he has always the air of what is called an ambitious writer. Tibullus is a poet, and in love ; his successor is more of an author : The former writes for his own gratification, or to propitiate his mistress : the latter does not always wait for the inspiration of the Muse, nor pour out his elegies as the effusions of real passion ; he is eager to write for posterity, that he may immortalize Cæsar and Cynthia, but above all—Propertius.

The circumstances of the lives of Tibullus and Propertius, and the different situations in which they were placed, tended to give a different character to their writings, and to lead them to expatiate on different topics. We have formerly remarked, in Tibullus, those frequent allusions to the loss of his paternal possessions, and the regrets he experienced for the diminution of his fortune. This was severely felt by him, because he had enjoyed the advantages of wealth in his youth. But Propertius was almost in child-

<sup>1</sup> Lib. III. el. I.

hood, when the lands he ought to have inherited were partitioned among the soldiery. He was thus too young to feel his loss so severely as Tibullus, or retain so lively a recollection of it in his advanced years. Hence he alludes to it but seldom and lightly, and, as if it cost him little uneasiness to have been deprived of advantages of which he never experienced the benefit, or as if it did not appear to him any great exertion to content himself with the little that remained. Propertius was patronized by Tullus and Mæcenas; but he does not seem to have had so close a connexion with either, as Tibullus with Messala. He does not speak of them in the tone of familiar and confidential affection, but with the humility of a client; and he does not appear to have placed any very high value on their friendship. The characters of these elegiac poets are still more strongly contrasted, when we regard them as lovers. The passion of Propertius for Cynthia is between the excessive tenderness which Tibullus expresses for Delia or Nemesis, and the lightness and carelessness with which Ovid flatters Corinna. He is eager to have the sole possession of her heart; he is not sparing of reproaches when he believes her unfaithful; he falls sick when she is cruel, and when she leaves Rome, he implores her to return. But his soul is not so absorbed in this one passion, as that of Tibullus. His mistress does not fill his heart to the exclusion of every other sentiment. We have not from Tibullus those confessions of Propertius, that he is easily excited and moved by beauty. Delia is all to Tibullus, till she forsakes him; then

Nemesis fully supplies her place ; and we do not know that he returned infidelity for infidelity, till his intercourse with each successive mistress was totally dissolved. He could not share his heart, nor release it, till his mistress had entirely snapt the cord. The love of Propertius partook more of temperament, and less of sentiment, than the passion of Tibullus. His poetical pictures are more sensual, and he dwells on circumstances at which Tibullus merely hints. He is moved, when Tibullus is agitated, and only sighs, when the latter is dissolved in tears. The ideas of death and the tomb less seldom break the chain of his joyous conceptions. Hence, when his heart is full, he goes with his complaints rather to the shades of his trees than those of *Orcus* : Hence his expostulations with Cynthia are more quiet ; his complaints of his rivals more manly, and his anxiety concerning her fidelity during absence is more within the bounds of moderation. From these causes, there is less monotony in Propertius. He indulges frequently in strokes of sarcasm ; his verses are often acrimonious and indignant, and are both philosophically and morally censorious. Sometimes he throws out taunts at his mistress, and complains, with much spirit, of her caprice and cupidity. We have aphorisms expressed with concise sententiousness, and single lines, which are distinguished by brevity of expression, and are pregnant with reflection. Propertius often thought what he should write ; Tibullus always wrote what he thought. As an *elegiac* writer, then, I have little hesitation in giving the preference to Tibullus. But



Propertius seems to have been much better fitted to sound the heroic trumpet. His richness of fancy, power of thought, and vehemence of expression, occasionally burst forth even in his love elegies, and almost reach to sublimity in those professedly heroic. The poems in the third and fourth books, which celebrate the actions of Augustus, are infinitely superior to the panegyric on Messala; and, had he followed the recommendation of Mæcenas,<sup>1</sup> to tune his lyre to epic strains, he might have reached a note by no means unworthy a contemporary of Virgil. But, though well qualified by the vigour of his style to excel in epic poetry, he did not choose to sacrifice the freedom of his inclinations for fame. He lived only for himself, and for the indulgence of those feelings of friendship and love, by which his soul was filled, and by which his writings are animated.

A passage of Quintilian shows that, in his time, the two elegiac writers had been already brought into comparison.<sup>2</sup> Their respective merits have since been frequently balanced by critics and commentators, as Gravina, Scaliger, and Muretus. The comparison instituted between them by this last distinguished scholar, though written with too much leaning in favour of Propertius, is expressed with exquisite taste and beauty: “Non injuriâ dubitatum est a veteribus, Tibullone, an Propertio, deferendus esset inter Lati-

<sup>1</sup> Lib. III. el. 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Inst. Orat.* Lib. X. c. 1. Elegiâ Græcos quoque provocamus; cujus mihi tersus atque elegans maximè videtur autor Tibullus. Sunt qui Propertium malint.

nos poëtas elegiæ scribendæ principatus: nam ut insunt in utroque permulta, quæ eos vulgarium numero exemptos in edito atque eminenti statuunt loco; sic propriæ quædam extant et elucent in utroque virtutes, quibus uterque alterius palmam ambiguum facere videatur. Summa in Tibullo elocutionis elegantia, et proprietas: summa in Propertio eruditionis poetiæ copia, et varietas: in illo Romana prope omnia, in hoc pleraque transmarina. Illum, nativa quædam et incorrupta Romani sermonis integritas, in mediâ urbe natum et altum esse, perspicue ostendit: hunc, præter cætera, forma et character ipse dicendi in Græcorum poëtarum scriptis assiduissime versatum esse demonstrat: cumque a sapientissimis viris traditum sit, duo esse præcipua poëticiæ dictionis ornamenta, το σαρφες, και το ξενικον, illo Tibullus, hoc Propertius excellere videtur. Mollior ille et delicatior: nervosior hic et accuratior. illo magis oblectere: hunc magis, ut opinor, admirare. illum iudices simplicius scripsisse, quæ cogitaret: hunc diligentius cogitasse quid scriberet. in illo plus naturæ: in hoc plus curæ atque industriæ fuisse perspicias. Quæ cùm ita se habeant; perdifficile est, decernere ac constituere, uter alteri præstat: nam si præcipua laus poëtarum in imitatione consistit; mihi quidem videtur Tibullus varios illos fluctuantis animi motus, quibus amantes agitari solent, melius imitatus esse. sin, ut quique ad optimum proxime accedit, ita ipsum quoque optimum judicandum est; crediderim sane, veterum illorum Græcorum, ac præcipue Callimachi, Propertium haud paulo similiorem fuisse: quâ etiam fiduciâ ipse se Romanum Callima-

chum vocare ausus est. Sed hæc ut ut sint, neque nostrum est, neque cujusquam hominis pudentis, et considerati, quâ de re veteres illi, quorum fuit et doctrina major, et judicium acrius, non liquere pronunciârunt, de eâ certi quicquam constituere, et litem secundum alterutrum dare. Satiùs fuerit, utrunque studiose ac diligenter evolvere, et utriusque virtutes accurate perpendere.”<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, the respective merits of Tibullus and Propertius will be better appreciated by comparing those various passages, in which they have treated of the same subject, than by entering on any general criticism, or quoting the contrasts exhibited by others. In the fifteenth elegy, of the third book, Propertius, like Tibullus, (Lib. III. el. 6.) invokes the aid of Bacchus against the power of love; in the sixth of the first, he declines to accompany Tullus to a foreign country, for the same reasons which induced Tibullus, (Lib. I. el. 1.) to refuse a similar invitation of Messala,—the pain it would inflict on his mistress; in the sixteenth, he complains, like his predecessor, (Lib. I. el. 2.) of the gate which excluded him from access to his mistress. The reader may also compare the dream of Propertius related in the fourth of the third, to a similar dream of Tibullus; and the seventeenth of the first book of Propertius, with the second of the third of Tibullus, where both poets, being absent from their mistresses, and doubtful if they should ever again behold them, figure them in imagination as performing the last funeral ceremo-

<sup>1</sup> *In Propert. Scholia. Præf.*



nies, and lamenting over their remains. In these, I think Tibullus will be found to have infinitely the advantage. Perhaps, of all the parallel passages, Propertius approaches nearest to his rival in the picture he draws of the life he intends to pass with Cynthia in the country, which almost equals a similar delineation by Tibullus:—<sup>1</sup>

———— Solos spectabis, Cynthia, montes,  
 Et pecus, et fines pauperis agricolæ.  
 Illic assidue tauros spectabis arantes,  
 Et vitem doctâ ponere falce comas ;  
 Atque ibi rara feres inculto thura sacello,  
 Hædus ubi agrestes corruet ante focos.  
 Ipse ego venabor. Jam nunc me sacra Dianæ  
 Suscipere, et Veneri ponere vota juvat ;  
 Incipiam captare feras, et reddere pinu  
 Cornua, et audaces ipse monere canes.  
 Non tamen ut vastos ausim tentare leones,  
 Aut celer agrestes cominus ire sues.  
 Hæc igitur mihi sit lepores audacia molles  
 Excipere, et stricto figere avem calamo :  
 Quà formosa suo Clitumnus flumina luco  
 Integit, et niveos abluit unda boves.<sup>2</sup>

The above is one of the most agreeable passages of Propertius, and shows how nearly he could approach the sweetness of Tibullus, when he trusted to his own resources, and controlled his propensity to fabulous and historical allusion. This beautiful elegy, written on occasion of Cynthia retiring to the country, abounds with well-selected images of rural scenery ; and, which is a peculiar merit, has no reference but to employ-

<sup>1</sup> See, above, p. 297.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. II. el. 15.

ments that a Roman lady and her lover might pursue consistently with their situations in life. The allusion to his native Clitumnus, and to the snow-white herds that grazed on its banks, which is beautifully introduced, fixes the favourite haunts of Propertius and his mistress. Its borders were the scenes of his sweetest enjoyments, and to the adjacent rocks and groves he poured out his solitary complaints—

Hæc certe deserta loca, et taciturna querenti,  
 Et vacuum zephyri possidet aura nemus.  
 Hic licet occultos proferre impune dolores,  
 Si modò sola queant saxa tenere fidem.<sup>1</sup>

It is not clear whether the spot where Propertius thus intended to pass his time was a country-seat of Cynthia, or one which remained to himself after the usurpation of the Triumvirs. But Propertius, it is evident, was born on the margin of the Clitumnus, frequented its scenery, and loved its streams. This river rises at the foot of the Apennines, a little below the village of Vene di Campello in Umbria, and falling, near Mevania, into the Tinia, descends with it to the Tiber.<sup>2</sup> The course of the Clitumnus is short, but it becomes a considerable stream immediately after its rise; and few rivers in Italy have been more celebrated for the limpid clearness of their currents, or the scenery of their banks. Pliny, in a letter written about a century after the death of Propertius, traces the beauties of the Clitumnus from

<sup>1</sup> Lib. I. el. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Cramer's *Ancient Italy*, Vol. I. p. 270.

its source to its junction with the Tinia. "Have you ever seen," asks he at his correspondent Romanus, "the source of the river Clitumnus? As I never heard you mention it, I imagine not. Let me therefore advise you to visit it immediately. It is but lately indeed I had that pleasure, and I condemn myself for not having seen it sooner. At the foot of a little hill, covered with venerable and shady cypress trees, a spring issues out, which, gushing in different and unequal streams, forms itself, after several windings, into a spacious basin, so extremely clear that you may see the pebbles and the little pieces of money which are thrown into it, as they lie at the bottom. Thence it is carried off, not so much by the declivity of the ground, as by its own strength and fulness. It is navigable almost as soon as it has quitted its source, and wide enough to admit a free passage for vessels to pass by each other, as they sail with or against the stream. The current runs so strong, though the ground is level, that the large barges which go down the river have no occasion to make use of their oars; while those which ascend, find it difficult to advance even with the assistance of oars and poles: and this vicissitude of labour and ease is exceedingly amusing, when one sails up and down merely for pleasure. The banks on each side are shaded with the verdure of great numbers of ash and poplar trees, as clearly and distinctly seen in the stream, as if they were actually sunk in it. The water is cold as snow, and as white too. Near it stands an ancient and venerable temple, wherein is placed the river god Clitumnus



clothed in a robe, whose immediate presence the prophetic oracles here delivered sufficiently testify. Several little chapels are scattered round, dedicated to particular gods distinguished by different names, and some of them, too, presiding over different fountains. For, besides the principal one, which is, as it were, the parent of all the rest, there are several other lesser streams, which, taking their rise from various sources, lose themselves in the river, over which a bridge is built that separates the sacred part from that which lies open to common use. Vessels are allowed to come above this bridge, but no person is permitted to swim, except below it. The Hispellates, to whom Augustus gave this place, furnish a public bath, and likewise entertain all strangers at their own expense. Several villas, attracted by the beauty of this river, are situated upon its borders. In short, every object that presents itself will afford you entertainment. You may also amuse yourself with numberless inscriptions, that are fixed upon the pillars and walls by different persons, celebrating the virtues of the fountain, and the divinity that presides over it.”<sup>1</sup> Though this letter was written about a century after the death of Propertius, it probably presents a tolerably accurate picture of the Clitumnus, with the temples and groves by which its banks were in his time embellished. At this day the Clitumnus, as a modern traveller remarks, “is still seen to roll its sacred waters, while on the summit of the hill are the remains of the tem-

<sup>1</sup> Melmeth's *Pliny*, Lib. VIII. ep. 8.

ple of Jupiter Clitumnus, which, when extant in its original purity, was equally famed for its beauty and situation, as well as resorted to on account of an oracle inspired either by Jove himself, or by the god of the river. At present it exhibits externally a portico of four Corinthian pillars, and internally the Cella of the ancient temple.”<sup>1</sup> “About three miles distant from Foligno,” says Eustace, “rises Bevagna, the ancient Mevania, and through a delightful valley that winds among the mountains, extending ten miles in breadth, and about forty in length, adorned with rows of vines, corn fields, and villages, the Clitumnus rolls his sacred streams, and glories in the beauty and fertility of his banks.” Then, after quoting the description of Pliny, he continues—“Some changes have, however, taken place, not indeed in the great features of Nature, but in those ornamental parts which are under the influence of cultivation. The ancient cypresses that shaded the hill; the ash and the poplar that hung over the river, have fallen long since, and have been replaced by mulberries, vines, and olives, less beautiful but more productive. The sacred grove has not been spared; the little chapels have disappeared, and the statue of the god has yielded its place to the triumphant cross. This circumstance is rather fortunate, as to it the temple owes its preservation. This temple consists of the Cella and a Corinthian portico, supported by four pillars and two pilasters: the pilasters are fluted; two of the pillars

<sup>1</sup> *Mementos of a Tour through France and Italy, in 1821-22.*  
Vol. II. p. 263.

are indented with two spiral lines winding around, and two ornamented with a light sculpture representing the scales of fish ; underneath is a vault or crypta ; the entrance is on the side as the portico hangs over the river. The walls are solid, the proportions beautiful, and the whole worthy of the Romans to whom it is ascribed. The Clitumnus," he concludes, " still retains its ancient name, and recalls to the traveller's recollection many a pleasing passage in the poets, connecting the beauty of the scenery about him with the pomps of a triumph, and transporting him from the tranquil banks of the rural stream to the crowds of the Forum, and to the majestic temples of the capitol :

Hinc albi, Clitumne, greges, et maxima taurus  
Victima, sæpe tuo perfusi flumine sacro,  
Romanos ad templa deûm duxere triumphos.

Propertius confines his softer muse to the beauty of the scenery, and seems to repose with complacency on the shaded bank—

Quà formosa sua Clitumnus flumina luco  
Integit, et niveos abluit unda boves.

Though white herds are still seen wandering over the rich plain watered by this river, yet a very small portion of it is employed in pasturage. Its exuberant fertility is better calculated for tillage ; and every year sees it successively covered with wheat, grapes, mulberries, and olives."<sup>1</sup> The white oxen,<sup>2</sup> however, which

<sup>1</sup> *Classical Tour*, Vol. I. c. 9.

<sup>2</sup> The tradition concerning the effects of the waters of the Clitumnus in producing white-coloured cattle, was still current in the



grazed on the banks, and were sent from the Clitumnus to the capitol to adorn the triumphal cars of the Romans, or to be sacrificed as victims to their gods, are mentioned by almost every Latin poet by whom the Clitumnus has been celebrated, and Childe Harold beautifully alludes to them in his poetical address :—

But thou, Clitumnus ! in thy sweetest wave  
Of the most living crystal that was ere  
The haunt of river nymph, to gaze and lave  
Her limbs where nothing hid them, thou dost rear  
Thy grassy banks, whereon the milk-white steer  
Grazes ; the purest god of gentle waters,  
And most serene of aspect, and most clear ;  
Surely that stream was unprofaned by slaughters—  
A mirror and a bath for beauty's youngest daughters !

And on thy happy shore a temple still,  
Of small and delicate proportion, keeps,  
Upon a mild declivity of hill,  
Its memory of thee ; beneath it sweeps  
Thy current's calmness ; oft from out it leaps  
The finny darter with the glittering scales,  
Who dwells and revels in thy glassy deeps ;  
While chance some scattered water-lily sails  
Down where the shallower wave still tells its bubbling tales.

Pass not unblest the Genius of the place !  
If through the air a zephyr more serene,  
Win to the brow, 'tis his ; and if ye trace  
Along his margin a more eloquent green,  
If on the heart the freshness of the scene

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time of Boccaccio : “ Clitumnus Umbriæ fluvius apud Mevaniam et Spoletum defluens, ex quo (ut quidam volunt) si confertim postquam concepit bos bibat album pariet.” (Boccaccio *de Fluminibus*, &c.)

Sprinkle its coolness, and from the dry dust  
Of weary life a moment lave it clean,  
With Nature's baptism,—'tis to him ye must  
Pay orisons for this suspension of disgust.<sup>1</sup>

The first half of the long reign of Augustus is commonly considered as entitled to the distinction of having produced a number of poets of great genius, whose talents, it is no doubt true, were fully expanded during that period, but who had, in fact, been all born and nurtured in the last years of the republic,—who had seen with their own eyes the independence of their country, and had been animated in their youth with the breath of Freedom, which perhaps has a stronger and more inspiring influence during her struggles for existence, than before her spirit has yet been roused by aggression.

What we loosely term the style of the Augustan age was not formed in the reign of Augustus. It was created under the Commonwealth, during the arduous struggles for liberty against Julius Cæsar, and his successors the Triumvirs, when the impulse which the institutions of ancient Rome had given to the human mind was not spent or exhausted. The poets who had hitherto appeared were free-born Romans. Horace ventured his life at Philippi for the sake of liberty, and Tibullus and Propertius lost their fortunes in the cause. Virgil, too, had acquired the language of freedom; and though he sometimes tuned his tongue to servile Pæans, his poetry, both in phrase and ge-

<sup>1</sup> *Childe Harold*, c. IV.

neral sentiment, bespeaks the dignity which freedom alone inspires. This nurture being united to the politeness and urbanity which accompanies the slippery transition from independence to blind obedience, produced that finished beauty which we still admire in the works of the Augustan poets of the earlier age.

The younger generation of poets who were born, or at least grew up to manhood, after the commencement of the monarchy, and whose genius shone forth at the close of the reign of Augustus, or during the tyranny of Tiberius, were of a school altogether different from their predecessors. In the last years of Augustus, we can already perceive the symptoms of declining vigour and corrupted taste. The chief poet of that period, and best representative of this new school, was—

## OVID.

This celebrated writer was born at Sulmo, (now Sulmona,) a town lying on the river Pescara, at the distance of ninety miles from Rome.<sup>1</sup> It was situated in the territory which had been anciently occupied by the Peligni, and which at present forms part of the district called Abruzzo, in the north-east corner of the kingdom of Naples. Ovid came into the world in 711, the memorable year in which the two consuls, Hirtius and Pansa, fell at the battle of Modena.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Tristia*, Lib. IV. el. 10.

<sup>2</sup> *Editus hinc ego sum : necnon, ut tempora noris,  
Cum cecidit fato Consul uterque pari.*

*Tristia*, Lib. IV. el. 10.



Little is precisely known concerning his parents, or any of his ancestors; but it appears, from several passages in his works, that he belonged to a family of ancient Roman knights.<sup>1</sup> The spot where he was born lay in a cold, though well-watered and fertile region, in which the male inhabitants were remarkable for their rudeness, and the females were noted for their deficiency in personal attractions. As Sulmo probably did not afford the means of polite education, Ovid was<sup>c</sup>carried to Rome at an early period of life, along with an elder brother, that he might be fully instructed in the arts and learning of the capital.<sup>2</sup> He soon disclosed an inclination towards poetry; but he was for some time dissuaded from a prosecution of the art by his father, whose chief object was to render him an accomplished orator and patron, and thereby open up to him the path to civic honours. The time was indeed past, when political harangues from the rostrum paved the way to the consulship or government of wealthy provinces; but distinction and emolument might yet be obtained by eminence in judicial proceedings, and by such eloquence as the servile deliberations of the senate still permitted. Ovid, accordingly, seems to have paid considerable attention to those studies which might qualify him to shine as a patron in the Forum, or procure for him a voice in a submissive senate. He practised the art of oratory, and not without success, in the schools of the rhetoricians, Arellius Fuscus and Porcius Latro, the two

<sup>1</sup> *Tristia*, Lib. IV. el. 10.

<sup>2</sup> *Tristia*, Lib. IV. el. 10.

most eminent teachers of their time. If we may be allowed to form an opinion of his rhetorical talents, from the eloquent speeches of Ajax and Ulysses, in their contest for the arms of Achilles, introduced in the *Metamorphoses*, he was well fitted to excel in declamatory exercises. Seneca, the rhetorician, who himself had heard him declaim in a controversy, informs us, that he surpassed all his fellow students in ingenuity: but he harangued in a sort of poetical prose; he was deficient in methodical arrangement, and he indulged too freely in digressions as also in the introduction of the common-places of disputation. He rarely declaimed in Controversies, except on ethical subjects; and preferred delivering those sort of persuasive harangues which have been termed *Suasoriæ*.<sup>1</sup> A fragment of one of his declamations has been preserved by Seneca, and is a curious specimen of those exercises in which the ingenuous Roman youth employed themselves in the age of Augustus.

During the period in which Ovid was still prosecuting his rhetorical studies, and when he had nearly reached the age of sixteen, he assumed the *Toga Virilis*. About the same time, he was honoured, by special favour of the emperor, with the *Latus Clavus*, or tunic ornamented with a strip of purple, which was of considerable breadth, to distinguish it from the dress of the knights who wore the *Angustus Clavus*. It was a peculiar badge of senatorial families, and the

<sup>1</sup> *Controverses*, Lib. II. *Controv.* 10.

investiture held out to Ovid the prospect of being received, when of the proper age, into the most august order of the state. The distinction was conferred the same day on which the emperor first received the title of Augustus; and Ovid, along with the other knights, had the honour of saluting him by that appellation.<sup>1</sup>

Having now assumed the *Toga Virilis*, and completed the usual course of rhetorical tuition at Rome, he proceeded to finish his education at Athens. It is not known whether he made much progress in philosophy during his stay in that city; but, from the tenor of many of his works, it appears probable, that he at least had studied physics, and that in morals he had embraced the tenets of the Epicurean school. In company with Æmilius Macer, he visited the most illustrious cities of Asia;<sup>2</sup> and on his way back to Rome, he passed with him into Sicily. He remained nearly a year at Syracuse, and thence made several agreeable excursions through different parts of the island.<sup>3</sup>

After his return to the capital, he ventured on a trial of his legal skill in the actual business of life. He successively held several of the lower judicial offices of the state, and also frequently acted as arbiter, highly to the satisfaction of the litigants whose causes

<sup>1</sup> Sancte Pater patriæ, sacrum tibi curia nomen  
Hoc dedit, hoc dedimus nos tibi nomen eques.

*Fastor. Lib. VI.*

<sup>2</sup> *Epist. e Ponto. Lib. II. 10.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*



he decided.<sup>1</sup> These avocations, however, were speedily relinquished. The father of Ovid had for some time restrained his son's inclination towards poetry ; but the arguments he deduced against its cultivation, from the stale example of the poverty of Homer,<sup>2</sup> were now receiving an almost practical refutation in the court favour and affluence of Virgil and Horace. The death, too, of his elder brother, by leaving Ovid sole heir to a fortune ample enough to satisfy his wants, finally induced him to abandon the profession to which he had been destined, and bid adieu at once to public affairs and the clamours of the Forum. He even threw aside the *Latus Clavus*, to resume the narrow border of the knights ; and to those who reproached him with his indolence, in leaving for poetic dreams the active life of the Forum, and his prospects of senatorial dignity, he gave the following noble reply, in one of his earliest elegies :—

Mortale est quod quæris opus : mihi fama perennis

Quæritur ; in toto semper ut orbe canar.

Vivet Mæonides, Tenedos dum stabit et Ide,

Dum rapidas Simois in mare volvet aquas ;

Vivet et Ascræus, dum mustis uva tumebit,

Dum cadet incurvâ falce resecta Ceres.

\* \* \* \* \*

Cedant carminibus reges, regumque triumphî ;

Cedat et auriferi ripa beata Tagi.

Vilia miretur vulgus ; mihi flavus Apollo

Pocula Castaliæ plena ministret aquæ.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Tristia*, Lib. II. v. 93.

<sup>2</sup> *Tristia*, Lib. IV. el. 10.

<sup>3</sup> *Amor*. Lib. I. el. 15.

Henceforth, accordingly, Ovid devoted himself to the service of the Muses ; though he joined with their purer worship the enjoyment of all those pleasures of life, which a capital, the centre of every folly and amusement, could afford. He possessed an agreeable villa and extensive farm in the neighbourhood of Sulmo, the place of his birth ; but he resided chiefly at his house on the Capitoline hill,<sup>1</sup> or his gardens, which lay a little beyond the city, at the junction of the Clodian and Flaminian ways, near the Pons Milvius,<sup>2</sup> where he composed many of his verses. He was fond, indeed, of the rural pleasures of flowers and trees, but he chiefly delighted to sow and plant them in these suburban gardens.<sup>3</sup> Far from hiding himself amid his groves, like the melancholy Tibullus, he courted society, and never was happier than amidst the bustle of the capital. One day, when Augustus,

<sup>1</sup> ——— ab hâc Capitolia cernens,  
Quæ nostro frustra juncta fuère lari.

*Trist.* I. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Cramer, *Ancient Italy*, Vol. I. p. 239.

Le poëte Ovide avoit un jardin au delà de Ponte Mole, entre les deux chemins de Florence et de Lorette. Sur la fin de l'année 1674, qu'on réparoit les grands chemins, par ordre du Pape Clement X. alors regnant, afin de faciliter les passages aux pèlerins qu'on attendoit pour le Jubilé universel de l'année 1675, on trouva au même endroit un sépulcre dans la terre, qu'on reconnût, par plusieurs inscriptions, être celui de la famille des Nasons, dont étoit Ovide. Le savant Bellori a fait graver un grand nombre de belles peintures qui y étoient, dont-il a donné l'explication par de savantes notes qu'il y a faites.—*L'Ancienne Rome*, par F. Deseine, T. II. c. 27. Leide, 1713.

<sup>3</sup> *Epist. e Ponto*, Lib. I. 8.

in his capacity of censor, according to an ancient custom, made the whole body of Roman knights pass before him in review, he presented our poet with a beautiful steed.<sup>1</sup> This gift was accounted a peculiar mark of favour, and shows that, at the time when it was bestowed, he had incurred no moral stain which merited the disapprobation of his prince.

While frequenting the court of Augustus, Ovid was well received by the politest of the courtiers. The titles of many of the epistles written during his banishment, show that they were addressed to persons well known to us even at this distance of time, as distinguished statesmen and imperial favourites. Messala, to whose house he much resorted, had early encouraged the rising genius, and directed the studies, of Ovid;<sup>2</sup> and the friendship which the father had extended to our poet was continued to him by the sons.<sup>3</sup> But his chief patron was Q. Fabius Maximus, long the friend of Augustus, and in the closing scenes of that prince's life, the chief confidant of his weaknesses and domestic sorrows.<sup>4</sup> Nor was Ovid's acquaintance less with the celebrated poets of his age than with its courtiers and senators. Virgil, indeed, he had merely seen, and premature death cut off the society of Tibullus;<sup>5</sup> but Horace, Macer, and Proper-

<sup>1</sup> At memini vitamque meam moresque probabas,  
Illo, quem dederas, prætereuntis equo.

*Tristia*, Lib. II. v. 89.

<sup>2</sup> *Epist. ex Ponto*, Lib. I. 7.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Tacit. *Annal.* Lib. I. c. 5.

<sup>5</sup> *Tristia*, Lib. IV. 10.



tius, were long his familiar friends, and often communicated to him their writings previous to publication.

While blessed with so many friends, he seems to have been undisturbed, at least during this period of his life, by the malice of a single foe : neither the court favour he enjoyed, nor his poetical renown procured him enemies ;<sup>1</sup> and he was never assailed by that spirit of envy and detraction by which Horace had been persecuted. His poetry was universally popular :<sup>2</sup> like the stanzas of Tasso, it was often sung on the streets or at entertainments ; and his verses were frequently recited in the theatre amid the applauses of the multitude.

Amongst his other distinctions, Ovid was a favourite of the fair, with whom his engagements were numerous, and his intercourse unrestrained.<sup>3</sup> He was extremely susceptible of love, and his love was ever changing. His first wife, whom he married when almost a boy, was unworthy of his affections, and possessed them but a short while. The second, who came from the country of the ancient Falisci, led a blameless life, but was soon repudiated. After parting with her, Ovid was united to a third, who was of the Fabian family. In her youth she had been the companion of Marcia, the wife of Fabius Maximus, and a favourite of Marcia's mother, who was the maternal aunt of Augustus.<sup>4</sup> She was a widow at the time of her mar-

<sup>1</sup> *Tristia*, IV. 10. 123.

<sup>2</sup> *Tristia*, I. 1. 64.

<sup>3</sup> *Amor.* Lib. II. 4. *Tristia*, IV. 10. 65.

<sup>4</sup> *E Ponto*, I. 2. 141

riage with Ovid, and had a daughter by her former husband, who was married to Suillius, the friend of Germanicus.<sup>1</sup> But these successive legitimate connexions did not prevent him from forming others of a different description. Corinna, a wanton, enticing beauty, whose real name and family the commentators and biographers of our poet have ineffectually laboured to discover, allured him in his early youth to her arms. From the elegies of Ovid, it appears that she was a married woman, but it does not seem to have been known even at Rome in the poet's time, who the lady was that he sung under that fictitious name; and others than the true Corinna advanced their vain pretensions to the celebrity which his verses conferred.<sup>2</sup> It is quite improbable that Corinna denoted Julia, the daughter of Augustus, and impossible that she represented Julia his grand-daughter, who was but an infant when Ovid recorded his amours with Corinna. It is evident, however, that she was a lady of some distinction, and of a rank superior to his own: She was attended not only by a waiting-maid, but a watchful eunuch. The poet compares her to Semiramis, and speaks of her condescension towards him as resembling that of the goddess Calypso in loving Ulysses. Corinna, whoever she may have been, always held the first place among his mistresses, and his passion for her is the chief subject of his amatory

<sup>1</sup> *E Ponto*, Lib. IV. 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Amor*, Lib. II. el. 17.

<sup>3</sup> *Amor*, I. 5. II. 17.

poems. But even she, with all her charms and fascinations, was compelled to share his affections not only with the legal partners of his heart, but with her own attendant ;<sup>1</sup> which, however, he perhaps justified, as one of the arts practised for gaining the affections of the mistress.

Ovid passed nearly thirty years in the voluptuous enjoyment of the pleasures of the capital—blest with the smiles of fortune, honoured with the favour of his prince, and fondly anticipating a tranquil old age.<sup>2</sup> He now remained at Rome the last of the constellation of poets, which had brightened the earlier age of Augustus. That prince had now lost his favourite ministers Mæcenas and Agrippa—He was less prosperous than during former years in the external affairs of the empire, and less prudently advised in his domestic concerns—He was insidiously alienated from his own family, and was sinking in his old age under the sway of the imperious Livia, and the dark-souled Tiberius. Ovid's friendships lay chiefly among those who supported the lineal descendants of Augustus—the unfortunate offspring of Julia and Agrippa. He thus became an object of suspicion to the party in power, and had lost many of those benefactors who might have shielded him from the storm, which now unexpectedly burst on his head, and swept from him every hope and comfort for the remainder of his existence.

It was in the year 762, and when Ovid had reached

<sup>1</sup> *Amor.* Lib. II. el. 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Tristia*, Lib. IV. 8. 29.



the age of 51,<sup>1</sup> that Augustus suddenly banished him from Rome to a wild and distant corner of the empire. Ovid has derived nearly as much celebrity from his misfortunes as his writings; and, having been solely occasioned by the vengeance of Augustus, they have reflected some dishonour on a name which would otherwise have descended to posterity as that of a generous and almost universal protector of learning and poetry. The real cause of his exile is the great problem in the literary history of Rome, and has occasioned as much doubt and controversy as the imprisonment of Tasso by Alphonso has created in modern Italy. The secret unquestionably was known to many persons in Rome at the time;<sup>2</sup> but as its discovery had deeply wounded the feelings of Augustus,<sup>3</sup> no contemporary author ventured to disclose it. Ovid himself has only dared remotely to allude to it, and when he does mention it, his hints and suggestions are scarcely reconcilable with each other,—sometimes speaking of his offence as a mistake or chance, in which he was more unfortunate than blameable, and at other times as if his life might have been forfeited without injustice.<sup>4</sup> No subsequent writer thought of

<sup>1</sup> Jamque decem lustris omni sine labe peractis,  
Parte premor vitæ deteriore meæ.

*Tristia*, Lib. IV. el. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Causa meæ cunctis nimium quoque nota ruinæ  
Non est indicio testificanda meo.

*Tristia*, IV. 10.—See also *E Ponto*, II. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Non sum jam tanti ut renovem tua vulnera, Cæsar.

*Tristia*, Lib. II.

<sup>4</sup> *Tristia*, Lib. V. 11.

revealing or investigating the mystery till it was too late, and it seems to be now closed for ever within the tomb of the Cæsars. The most ancient opinion (to which Sidonius Apollinaris refers) is, that Ovid was banished for having presumed to love Julia, the daughter of Augustus, and for having celebrated her under the name of Corinna ;<sup>1</sup> and it was considered as a confirmation of this opinion that exile was the punishment inflicted on Sempronius, the most known and best beloved of all her paramours. This notion was adopted by Crinitus and Lylius Gyraldus ; but it was refuted as early as the time of Aldus Manutius, who has shown, from the writings of Ovid, that he was engaged in the amour with his pretended Corinna in his earliest youth ; and it certainly is not probable that such an intrigue should have continued for about thirty years, and till Ovid had reached the age of 51, or that Augustus should have been so slow in discovering the intercourse which subsisted. Julia, too, was banished to Pandataria in the year 752, which was nine years before the exile of Ovid, and why should his punishment have been delayed so long after the discovery of his transgression ? Besides, had he been guilty of such an offence, would he have dared, in his *Tristia*, when soliciting his recall from banishment, to justify his morals to the emperor, and to declare

<sup>1</sup> Et te carmina per libidinosa  
 Notum, Naso tener, Tomosque missum ;  
 Quondam Cæsareæ nimis puellæ  
 Falso nomine subditum Corinnæ.

*Carm.* 23. v. 158.

that he had committed only an involuntary error? Or would he have been befriended and supported in exile by the greatest men of Rome, some of whom were the favourites and counsellors of Augustus?

Subsequently to the time of Manutius, various other theories have been devised to account for the exile of Ovid. Dryden<sup>1</sup> thinks it probable that "he had stumbled by some inadvertency on the privacies of Livia, and seen her in a bath; for the words, *Sine veste Dianam*," he remarks, "agree better with Livia, who had the fame of chastity, than with either of the Julias, who were both noted for incontinency." It would no doubt appear that our poet had a practice of breaking in unseasonably on such occasions.<sup>2</sup> But it is not probable that Augustus would have punished such an offence so severely, or that it would have affected him so deeply. Livia, at the time of Ovid's banishment, had reached the age of 64, and was doubtless the only person in the empire who would consider such an intrusion as intentional. Tiraboschi has maintained, at great length, that he had been the involuntary and accidental witness of some immoral turpitude committed by one of the imperial family,—most probably Julia, the grand-daughter of Augustus, who had inherited the licentious disposition of her mother, and was banished from Rome to the island of Trimerus on account of her misconduct, nearly at the same time that the sentence of exile was pronounced on Ovid. This theory, on the whole, seems the most plausible, and

<sup>1</sup> *Preface to Translation of Ovid's Epistles.*

<sup>2</sup> *De Art. Amandi*, Lib. III. v. 245.



most consistent with the hints dropped by the poet himself. He repeatedly says, that the offence for which he had been banished was a folly, an error, and imprudence, rather than a crime,—using the words *stultitia* and *error*, in opposition to *crimen* and *facinus*.<sup>1</sup> He invariably talks of what he had seen as the cause of his misfortunes,<sup>2</sup> and he admits, that what he had seen was a fault. But he farther signifies, that the fault he had witnessed was of a description which offended modesty, and which therefore ought to be covered with the veil of night.<sup>3</sup> It is by no means improbable that he should have detected the granddaughter of the emperor in some disgraceful intrigue. Neither of the Julias confined their amours to the recesses of their palaces, so that the most dissolute frequenter of the lowest scenes of debauchery may have become a witness to their turpitude. Farther, it is evident, that it was something of a private nature, and which wounded the most tender feelings of Augustus, who, we know from history, was peculiarly sensitive with regard to the honour of his family. Lastly, it appears, that, after being a witness of the shameful transgression of Julia, Ovid had fallen into some indis-

<sup>1</sup> *Tristia*, Lib. I. cl. 2. v. 100, et passim.

<sup>2</sup> Cur aliquid vidi? cur noxia lumina feci?

Cur imprudenti cognita culpa mihi est?

Inscius Actæon vidit sine veste Dianam;

Præda fuit canibus non minus ille suis.

*Tristia*, Lib. II. v. 103.

<sup>3</sup> *Tristia*, III. cl. 6.

cretion through timidity,<sup>1</sup> which might have been avoided, had he enjoyed the benefit of good advice;<sup>2</sup> and it seems extremely probable, that the imprudence he committed was in revealing to others the discovery he had made, and concealing it from Augustus.

It is not likely that any better guess will now be formed on the subject. Another, however, has been recently attempted by M. Villenave, in a life of Ovid, prefixed to a French translation of the *Metamorphoses*. His opinion, which has been also adopted by Schœll,<sup>4</sup> is, that Ovid, from accident or indiscretion, had become possessed of some state secret concerning Agrippa Posthumus, the son of Agrippa and Julia, and grandson of Augustus. The existence of the family of Julia long formed the great obstacle to the ambition of Livia, and her son Tiberius. Agrippa Posthumus, the last survivor of the race, was banished from Rome to the island of Planasia, near Corsica, in 758; but considerable apprehensions seem to have been entertained by Livia that he might one day be recalled. Ovid, in a poetical epistle from Pontus, written in the fifth year of his exile, accuses himself as the cause of the death of his friend Fa-

<sup>1</sup> Nil nisi non sapiens possum *timidusque* vocari;  
Hæc duo sunt animi nomina vera mei.

*De Ponto*, II. 2.

Aut timor aut error—nobis prius obfuit error.

*Tristia*, IV. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Tristia*, III. 6, 13.

<sup>3</sup> Harles, *Introduct. in Lit. Rom.* Tom. II. p. 443.

<sup>4</sup> *Hist. abrégée de la Litter. Rom.* T. I. p. 2. 40.

bius Maximus ; and this Fabius Maximus, it appears, was the chief confidant of the emperor in all that related to the affairs of Agrippa, which he wished concealed from Livia. A few months before his own death, Augustus, attended by Fabius Maximus alone, privately visited Agrippa in his retirement of Planasia ; and the object of his journey from Rome having been discovered by Livia, the death of his counsellor followed shortly after. It will be remarked, however, that this voyage was undertaken in 666, four years subsequently to the exile of Ovid, and was disclosed through the indiscretion of the wife of Fabius.<sup>1</sup> But the French author conjectures, that the scene to which Ovid alludes in his writings as having witnessed, had some close connexion with the ensuing visit to Planasia, and gave a commencement to those suspicions which terminated in the death of his friend. His chief objection to the theory of Tiraboschi is, that Augustus would not have banished Ovid for discovering or revealing the disgrace of Julia, when, by her exile, he had already proclaimed her licentiousness to the whole Roman people. But, in fact, Ovid was not banished for the sake of concealment. The discovery, which proved so fatal to himself, was no secret at Rome ; and, had secrecy been the emperor's object, banishment was the worst expedient to which he could have resorted. Ovid might better have been bribed to silence ; or, if sentence of death could have served the purpose more

<sup>1</sup> Tacit. *Annal.* Lib. I. c. 5.



effectually, the old Triumvir would not have scrupled to pronounce it. The secret, however, was already divulged, and was in the mouths of the citizens. Ovid was therefore exiled as a punishment for his temerity, as a precaution against farther discoveries, and to remove from the imperial eye the sight of one, whose presence must constantly have reminded Augustus of his disgrace both as a sovereign and parent.

Whatever may have been the real cause of the exile of Ovid, the pretext for it was the licentious verses he had written.<sup>1</sup> Augustus affected a regard for public morals ; and concealing, on this occasion, the true motives by which he was actuated, he claimed a merit with the senate, and all who were zealous for the reformation of manners, in thus driving from the capital a poet, who had reduced licentiousness to a system, by furnishing precepts, deduced from his own practice, which might aid the inexperienced in the successful prosecution of lawless love. He carefully excluded from the public libraries, not merely the *Art of Love*, but all the other writings of Ovid.<sup>2</sup> It is evident, however, that this was all colour and pretext. Ovid himself ventures gently to hint, that Augustus was not so strict a moralist that he would seriously have thought of punishing the composition of a few licentious verses with interminable exile.<sup>3</sup> In point of expression, too, the lines of Ovid are delicate compared with those of Horace, whom the emperor

<sup>1</sup> *De Ponto*, II. 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Tristia*, Lib. III. 1. 65.

<sup>3</sup> *Tristia*, Lib. II. v. 524.

had always publicly favoured and supported. Nor was his sentence of banishment passed till many years after their composition ; yet, though so long an interval had elapsed, it was suddenly pronounced, as on the discovery of some recent crime, and was most rapidly carried into execution.

The mandate for his exile arrived unexpectedly in the evening. The night preceding his departure from Rome, was one of the utmost grief to his family, and of consternation and dismay to himself. In a fit of despair, he burned the copy of his *Metamorphoses*, which he was then employed in correcting, and some others of his poems. He made no farther preparations for his journey, but passed the time in loud complaints, and adjurations to the gods of the Capitol.<sup>1</sup> His chief patron, Fabius Maximus, was absent at the time, and his only daughter was with her husband in Africa ; but several of his friends, particularly Carus and Celsus, came to his home, where they remained part of the night, and endeavoured, though in vain, to console him.<sup>2</sup> After much irresolution, he at length departed on the approach of dawn, his dress neglected, and his hair dishevelled.<sup>3</sup> His wife, who had wished to accompany him, but was not permitted,<sup>4</sup> fainted the moment he left the house.<sup>5</sup>

After his departure from Rome Ovid proceeded towards Brundisium, where he had an interview with

<sup>1</sup> *Tristia*, Lib. I. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *E Ponto*, Lib. I. ep. 9.

<sup>3</sup> *Tristia*, I. 3. 90.

<sup>4</sup> *Tristia*, I. 2. 41.

<sup>5</sup> *Tristia*, I. 3. 91.

Fabius Maximus. He recommended his wife to the care of this friend, and received repeated assurances of his support.<sup>1</sup> From Brundisium he sailed, towards the close of the month of November. The vessel in which he had embarked encountered a dreadful storm in the Ionian sea,<sup>2</sup> and such was the danger, that the sailors for some time despaired of the safety of the ship.<sup>3</sup> It was driven a considerable distance out of its intended course: the coast of Italy long remained in sight, and the unfortunate exile was nearly borne back on its interdicted shore.<sup>4</sup> During this part of the voyage he was ill treated by the sailors, and plundered by the attendants who had accompanied him from Italy.<sup>5</sup> At length, however, he arrived at Lechæum, a sea-port on the western side of the Isthmus of Corinth. He travelled by land across the Isthmus, and embarked in another vessel, which he admits was an excellent one,<sup>6</sup> at Cenchrea, the harbour on its eastern coast. He thence sailed over the Ægean sea, and having passed through the straits of Hellespont and Bosphorus, and touched at various islands and harbours,<sup>7</sup> he entered the Euxine sea, and landed at last at Tomos, the destined spot of his perpetual exile. No Roman had ever yet been banished to such a distance from the capital. Cicero had passed the period of his exile in Macedon, Marcellus in Mitylene, and Milo at Marseilles. But no

<sup>1</sup> *E Ponto*, II. 3.<sup>2</sup> *Tristia*, I. 2.<sup>3</sup> *Tristia*, I. 3. 113.<sup>4</sup> *Tristia*, I. 3. 120.<sup>5</sup> *Tristia*, IV. 10. 101.<sup>6</sup> *Tristia*, I. 9. 5.<sup>7</sup> *Tristia*, I. 9.



such mitigation of punishment was granted to Ovid. The town of Tomi or Tomos, (now Tomoswar or Baba,) was situated on the shore of the Euxine, a few miles to the south of the spot where the most southern branch of the Danube unites with that sea. It lay in the territory of Pontus,<sup>1</sup> a maritime district of Mœsia, (now Bulgaria, in the Turkish empire,) which was at that time the most recent acquisition of the Roman power,<sup>2</sup> and had scarcely yet been completely brought under the yoke. It was situated between forty-four and forty-five degrees of latitude, which is not higher than the finest provinces of France, and the north of Italy. The mountains, however, which lie to the south—the northerly and easterly winds that blow from the Euxine sea, and the dampness of the soil, occasioned by the thick forests and by the marshes of the Danube, rendered the climate totally different from that of these favoured regions.

Tomos had been originally an Athenian colony, and was still inhabited by a few remains of the Greeks; but it was chiefly filled with the Getæ,<sup>3</sup> a rude and uncivilized tribe of Scythians, who spoke a Gothic dialect. Some of these barbarians were along with Ovid in the small and inconvenient house he inhabited,<sup>4</sup> and kept him in a state of constant alarm, by their ferocious appearance. They neither cut their beards

<sup>1</sup> It was so called from the Pontus Euxinus, by which it was bounded on the east, and must not be confounded with Pontus in Asia, once the kingdom of the celebrated Mithridates.

<sup>2</sup> *Tristia*, II. v. 200.

<sup>3</sup> *Tristia*, Lib. V. 10.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

nor hair, which, hanging dishevelled over the face, gave a peculiar horror to their aspect. The whole race were clothed in the shaggy skins of various animals,<sup>1</sup> and each barbarian constantly carried with him a bow, and a quiver containing poisoned arrows.<sup>2</sup> They daily filled the streets with tumult and uproar, and even the litigants sometimes decided their causes before the tribunals by the sword.<sup>3</sup>

The town was built on an eminence in a sandy desert, and was separated only by walls and gates from the enemy:<sup>4</sup> its ramparts were feeble, and insufficient to protect it<sup>5</sup> from the incursions of the neighbouring Getæ, or still more formidable tribes to the north of the Danube, who crossed the river when it was frozen,<sup>6</sup> and came to the assault when least expected, pouncing like birds of prey on their plunder. They were powerful in cavalry, and were provided with poisoned darts,<sup>7</sup> which they shot from a great distance, over the walls of the town, into the streets. These weapons were frequently picked up by the inhabitants; and after an attack of this sort, the tops of the houses were all bristled with the shafts of arrows.<sup>8</sup> Sometimes our poet had to grasp a sword and buckler, and place a helmet on his grey head, on an alarm given by the sentinel,<sup>9</sup> when squadrons of barbarians

<sup>1</sup> *Tristia*, III. 10.

<sup>2</sup> *Tristia*, V. 7.

<sup>3</sup> *Tristia*, V. 10.

<sup>4</sup> *E Ponto*, I. 8.

<sup>5</sup> *Tristia*, V. 10.

<sup>6</sup> *Tristia*, III. 10.

<sup>7</sup> *E Ponto*, IV. 7. *Tristia*, III. 10. 55. IV. 1. 78.

<sup>8</sup> *Tristia*, V. 10. *E Ponto*, I. 2. 3.

<sup>9</sup> *Tristia*, IV. 1. 73.





to exchange the theatres, the baths, the porticos, and gardens of Rome,—the court of Augustus, the banks of the Tiber, the sun and soil of Italy!

While thus driving him to the most remote and savage extremity of his empire—the “*magni penetralia mundi*”—Augustus softened the sentence he had pronounced on Ovid with some alleviating qualifications. He did not procure his condemnation by a decree of the Senate, but issued his own mandate, in which he employed the word relegation (*relegatio*), and not banishment (*exilium*),<sup>1</sup> leaving him, by this choice of terms, the enjoyment of his paternal fortune, and some other privileges of a Roman citizen.<sup>2</sup> Nor were other circumstances wanting in his fate which might have contributed to impart consolation. His third wife, to whom he was tenderly attached, though not permitted to accompany him on the voyage to Scythia, continued faithful to her husband during his long exile, and protected his property from the rapacity of his enemies.<sup>3</sup> Many of his friends remained unshaken by his misfortunes, and from time to time he received letters from them, giving him hopes of recall. The Getæ, though they at length became displeased with his incessant complaints of their country,<sup>4</sup> received him, at first, with kindness and sympathy, and long paid him such distinguished honours,<sup>5</sup> that he almost appears to have realized the fables of Orpheus and Amphion, in softening their native ferocity by the magic of the Roman lyre. The Muse,

<sup>1</sup> *Tristia*, V. 11. 21.

<sup>2</sup> *Tristia*, IV. 9. V. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Tristia*, I. 5.

<sup>4</sup> *E Ponto*, IV. 14.

<sup>5</sup> *E Ponto*, IV. 9, and IV. 14.

whom he so long had worshipped amid more smiling scenes, “Redressed the rigours of the inclement clime;” and if he found any consolation amid the wilds of Scythia, it lay in the constant exercise of his poetical talents,<sup>1</sup> in the sense that his works were read and applauded through the Roman empire,<sup>2</sup> and in the fond dream of immortality.<sup>3</sup>

Nothing, however, could compensate for the deprivations he suffered. He gradually lost not only his relish for life, but all repose of mind, and became melancholy and dejected. At the age of fifty, his happiness was as dependent on the operation of external circumstances as in the morning of life. For him there shone but one abode of felicity; and it lay in the heart and capital of the empire. The theatres, and forums, and Corinnas of Rome, ever presented themselves to his imagination,<sup>4</sup> in contrast with the bleak regions on which his eye actually rested. He might have uttered fewer complaints, had his residence been limited to a Sabine farm, or to the Umbrian shades where Tibullus lay contented in the arms of Delia, but he would not have been tranquil or satisfied. He required the various and manifold pleasures of the capital, to fill up his measure of delight. Even time could not mitigate the intensity of his feelings; and at the end of seven years, the shores of the Euxine appeared as frightful as on the day when he first contrasted them with the banks of the Tiber.

Accordingly, during the long period of his exile,

<sup>1</sup> *Tristia*, V. 7. 33.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Tristia*, III. 3. 79. III. 7. 50.

<sup>4</sup> *Tristia*, III. IV. 57.—*E Ponto*, I. 8.

nothing was omitted on Ovid's part which he thought might prevail on the emperor to recall him to Rome, or assign him, at least, a place of milder exile; and Sicily was particularly pointed at, as a suitable spot for such a mitigation of punishment.<sup>1</sup> This is the object of all his epistles from Pontus. He flattered Augustus during his life with an extravagance which bordered on idolatry;<sup>2</sup> and the letters addressed to his friends inculcate skilful lessons of choosing the most favourable opportunities for propitiating the despot. It does not appear, however, that any one of his numerous and powerful acquaintances ventured to solicit his recall, or to entreat Augustus in his behalf. Yet the poet seems to suppose, that Augustus, previous to his decease, was beginning to feel more favourably towards him.<sup>3</sup> After the death of the emperor, with a view doubtless of propitiating his successor, Ovid wrote a poem on his Apotheosis, and consecrated to him, as a new deity, a temple, where he daily repaired to offer incense and worship.<sup>4</sup> Nor was he sparing in his panegyrics on the new emperor;<sup>5</sup> but he found Tiberius equally inexorable with Augustus.

The health of Ovid had been early and severely affected by his exile and confinement at Tomos. He was naturally of a feeble constitution, and, in the place of his banishment, every circumstance was combined which could wear out the mind and body. The rigour of the climate bore hard on one, who had pass-

<sup>1</sup> *Tristia*, V. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Tristia*, Lib. II.

<sup>3</sup> *E Ponto*, IV. 6.

<sup>4</sup> *E Ponto*, IV. 9.

<sup>5</sup> *E Ponto*, IV. 13.



ed a delicate youth of pleasure and repose, under an Italian sky. He could not eat the coarse viands of the Getæ, and his drink was salt or putrid water drawn from the neighbouring marshes.<sup>1</sup> Even the wine was harsh and unpalatable; and being always frozen in the bottle,<sup>2</sup> it could not be poured out and quaffed as a refreshing beverage, but was usually cut in bits, and eaten as a cake. His sleep, too, was broken by continual alarms, or disturbed by dreams,<sup>3</sup> which presented a too faithful image of the miseries to which he was subjected when awake: his mind was harassed with continual vexation and disappointment; he had no physician whom he could consult,<sup>4</sup> no friend to whom he could complain. He in consequence, soon after his arrival at Pontus, totally lost his strength and appetite,<sup>5</sup> and became thin, pale, and exhausted.<sup>6</sup> From time to time he recovered<sup>7</sup> and relapsed,<sup>8</sup> till at length, at the age of 60, he sunk under the hardships to which he had been so long subjected. His death happened in the year 771, in the ninth year of his exile, and the fourth of the reign of Tiberius. Before his decease, he expressed a wish that his ashes might be carried to Rome, lest his shade should continue to wander in the barbarous region, for which, during life, he had felt such horror.<sup>9</sup> Even this desire, however, was not complied with. His bones were

<sup>1</sup> *E Ponto*, II. 7. III. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Tristia*, III. 10. 23.

<sup>3</sup> *E Ponto*, I. 2. 45.

<sup>4</sup> *Tristia*, III. 3. 10.

<sup>5</sup> *E Ponto*, I. 10.

<sup>6</sup> *Tristia*, III. 8. 28. IV. 6. 41.

<sup>7</sup> *Tristia*, V. 2.

<sup>8</sup> *Tristia*, V. 13. 5.

<sup>9</sup> *Tristia*, III. 3. 63.

buried in the Scythian soil, and the Getæ erected to him a monument near the spot of his earthly sojourn :

Et jacet Euxinis vates Romanus in oris ;  
 Romanum vatem barbara terra tegit ;  
 Terra tegit vatem teneros qui lusit amores  
 Barbara quam gelidis alluit Ister aquis.  
 Nec te, Roma, pudet, quæ tanto immitis alumno  
 Pectora habes ipsis barbariora Getis.<sup>1</sup>

It would seem that Ovid had commenced his poetical career with some attempts at heroic subjects, particularly the *Gigantomachia*. But he soon directed his attention from such topics, to others which were more consonant to his disposition, and which he could turn to some advantage in the prosecution of his amours—

Quid mihi profuerit velox cantatus Achilles ?  
 Quid pro me Atrides alter et alter agent ?  
 At facie teneræ laudatâ sæpe puellæ,  
 Ad vatem pretium carminis ipsa venit.<sup>2</sup>

Accordingly, the earliest writings of Ovid now extant are amatory elegies in the style of Tibullus and Propertius ; and in composing these, he did not ap-  
 ply, he informs us, to Apollo or the Muses for assistance,—love being his only guide. The elegies styled *Amores*, amounting in all to forty-nine, were originally divided by the poet into five books. There are now only three books in the printed editions of Ovid ; but it has been doubted whether all the elegies he

<sup>1</sup> Politian.

<sup>2</sup> *Amor. Lib. II. el. 1.*

wrote be still included in this division, or if two books have been suppressed. These elegies, with a very few exceptions, are of an amatory description. There is nothing in which ancient and modern poets differ so much as in the expression of amorous sentiment. This must be chiefly attributed to the romantic love and gallantry by which the times of chivalry were distinguished. A virtuous Fair then acquired graces and embellishments which fascinated the imagination, and which, in ancient Greece or Rome, belonged only to some Thais or Corinna, who never could have gained the respect of a lover, or have presented to the indulgence of passion those obstacles by which, in the middle ages, love was nourished, till it became a species of warm and almost phrensied devotion. The genius of Provençal poetry was allied to that of chivalry, and the poetry of love was transmitted by the Troubadours to Petrarch, who refined the manners of the world, by embalming in his Platonic sonnets the best part of the spirit of the middle ages. The Italian poets raised their thoughts to some divine Beatrice or angelic Laura, and exhausted the subject of that species of love which chiefly regards the affections of the heart. We find amatory sentiments differently expressed by those modern poets of Italy, who wrote in Latin, in imitation of Propertius or Ovid, and those who, like Bembo, took Petrarch for a model; and even when the same author has written both in Latin and Italian, he expresses himself differently in these languages, on the topic of love. Maria



Molza, who in his life was more licentious than Tibullus or Ovid, is Platonic and sentimental in his Italian verses.

Not but that amorous passion was attended with as grand results in the classical as the chivalrous ages:—the adventures were as daring, and the catastrophes as tragical. But the flame which Helen, Lucretia, or Cleopatra, kindled in the breasts of their lovers, was illicit and impure, and little fitted as a theme for sentimental elegy. Tenderness and delicacy of affection were little known: Hence the poet's expression of feeling was unvaried, and the language of love was deprived of its most captivating graces. "Les anciens," says the Abbé de Sade, speaking of the manner in which Petrarch treated the subject of love—"les anciens ne connoissoient pas ce langage de cœur si délicat et si pur. Dans les beaux siècles de l'ancienne Rome, les poètes n'entretenoient leurs maitresses que des faveurs qu'ils desiroient, ou de celles qu'ils avoient reçues."<sup>1</sup>

A great proportion of Ovid's countrymen were themselves incapable of forming a serious and sentimental attachment, and naturally relished his gaiety and gallantry more than the most heartfelt expression or deep-drawn sighs of devoted love. The *Amores* of Ovid are accordingly, for the most part, a mere record of his intrigues with Corinna and other Beauties. In some of the elegies, Corinna is named, but in others it is difficult to know whether the poet speaks

<sup>1</sup> *Vie de Pétrarque, Pref.*

of her, or of a rival she had in his affections. His complete success with Corinna, which is related in one of the earliest elegies, rather diminishes the interest of those which follow. The subsequent interviews with Corinna were not so easily obtained nor always so fortunate as the first. Sometimes his letters were returned, and sometimes her porter denied him admittance. At other times she absented herself from Rome, or upbraided him on account of the unworthy rivals by whom she had been supplanted. All this may have much amorous interest, but, in due course, it ought rather to have preceded than followed the *Ecce Corinna venit* of the fifth elegy.

As an elegiac writer, Ovid has more resemblance to Propertius than to Tibullus. His images and ideas are for the most part drawn from the real world, and many of his poems were actually written and employed to forward his amours. He dwells not amid the visionary scenes of Tibullus—he indulges not in his melancholy dreams, nor pours forth such tenderness of feeling as the lover of Delia. Ovid passed his youth without suffering or sorrow. His natural cheerfulness of disposition was heightened by possessing the ample means of subsistence, and inhabiting such a capital as Rome. Hence, his elegies are triumphant and wanton. The happy deceits he had practised, and the difficulties he had overcome, are all recorded. Whatever subject he touches is treated in a sportive humour. He tells us how Cupid deceived him, and stole a foot of his hexameters: he instructs his mistress in the dumb language of love,

and compares the vigilance and exertions of a lover with those of a soldier. Even when he laments the loss of a mistress, or complains of her infidelity, his gaiety breaks out amidst his anger and sorrow, and he is never overwhelmed like Tibullus forsaken by Nemesis or Delia.

The *Amores* of Ovid have all the brilliancy and freshness of the period of life, in which they were written. They are full of ingenious conceptions, graceful images, and agreeable details. They always give us, as La Harpe remarks, the idea of a writer sincerely loving pleasure: many poets of the same description as Ovid, only assume the air of voluptuaries, and are evidently more wise and sober, than they would have us believe. These are the chief excellencies of the elegies of Ovid. Their faults consist in an abuse of the facility of invention, a repetition of the same ideas, an occasional affectation and antithesis in the language of love, and, (as in the elegies of Propertius,) the too frequent and sometimes not very happy or appropriate allusion to mythological fables.

Before finishing the elegies styled *Amores*, Ovid had already commenced the composition of the *Heroides*,<sup>1</sup> which are likewise written in the elegiac measure. They are epistles supposed to be addressed chiefly from queens and princesses, who figured in the heroic ages, to the objects of their vehement affections. It is not certain, whether the epistle, in the works of Propertius, from Arethusa to Lycotas, was prior or

<sup>1</sup> *Amor.* Lib. II. el. 18.



subsequent to the appearance of the *Heroides*. But it differs so far from this work of Ovid, that, though the names of Arethusa and Lycotas be fictitious, the scene and incidents are laid in real life, and it is written not in the character of an ancient nymph or heroine, but is supposed to be addressed to a Roman soldier by his wife. Hence, Ovid claims for himself the invention of this species of composition, though it is, in fact, merely a new form of the elegy. It is a passionate soliloquy, in which the mind gives vent to the distresses and emotions under which it labours; but the epistolary form bestows on it a propriety, interest, and animation, of which the elegy, or even a well-conducted soliloquy in tragedy, is scarcely susceptible. Impatience under the pressure of grief, and the consequent disorder of the mind, give nature and probability to such expostulations with those who have occasioned its sufferings. The art of the poet, is chiefly exhibited by opening the complaint at a period of time which affords scope for a display of the most tender sentiments, as well as the most sudden and violent changes of passion.

The heroic epistles of Ovid, are not fewer than twenty-one; but there is some doubt with regard to the authenticity of six of the number. Love, of the most ardent description, is the subject of them all; even those which are addressed to absent husbands, are as impassioned as those to youthful lovers. Complaints of separation, infidelity, and unrequited affection, are the chief topics. They generally commence with a sort of introduction or narrative, concerning some an-

cient history or mythological fable, in order to explain the situation in which the writer of the epistle is placed. These narrations are sometimes a little awkwardly introduced, and too often remind us of the first scenes of plays, in which, for the sake of the audience, matters are related, that must of necessity have been perfectly well known to the hearers in the dramatic dialogue. After this preliminary exposition, the sorrowful and injured queen or princess pours forth her complaints, sometimes in the soft tone of elegy, but at others in transports swelling to tragic effect and pathos.

These epistles are,

1st.—From Penelope to Ulysses. Here the chaste Queen of Ithaca, being unacquainted with the causes of her husband's tedious absence, urges him to return for the protection of his family and kingdom.

2d.—Phyllis to Demophoon. Demophoon the son of Theseus, on his way home from the Trojan war, having been driven on the coast of Thrace, was hospitably received by Phyllis, the queen of that country. After a time, she permitted him to go to Athens, on his promising to return in one month. When four had elapsed, she addresses to him this epistle. Some of the passages in it are closely imitated by Chaucer, in his *Legende of Phyllis*, which forms part of his *Legende of Good Women*. For example, the following lines of Ovid—

Sum decepta tuis et amans et femina verbis ;

Dî faciant, laudis summa sit ista tuæ :

Inter et Ægidas mediâ statuaris in urbe ;  
 Magnificus titulis stet pater ante suis.  
 Hoc tua post illum titulo signetur imago :  
 Hic est, cujus amans hospita capta dolo est.  
 De tantâ rerum turbâ, factisque parentis,  
 Sedit in ingenio Cressa relictâ tuo.—

are thus imitated by the old English poet :—

To God (quoth she) praie I, and oft have praied,  
 That it be now the gretist price of all,  
 And moste honour, that ere you shall befall ;  
 And when thine old auncetirs paintid be,  
 In whiche men maie ther worthinesse yse,  
 Then praie I God thou paintid be also :  
 That folke maie redin fortheby as thei go,—  
 Lo ! this is he that, with his flattiry,  
 Betrayid hath, and doen her villany,  
 That was his truè love in thought and dede !  
 But sothly of o point yet maie thei rede  
 That ye ben like your fathir as in this.

3d.—Briseis to Achilles. This epistle is supposed to be addressed by Briseis to the Grecian hero, after his contest for her sake with Agamemnon. She persuades him to resume his arms against the Trojans, and to receive her back from the leader of the Greeks, who had at length offered to restore her to his possession. A great part of this epistle is translated from the *Iliad*. The passage in which Briseis calls to remembrance the misfortunes of her own country previous to her captivity, and the death of her three brothers, is taken from the lamentation of Briseis over Patroclus, in the nineteenth book of the *Iliad* ; and her exciting Achilles to renew the con-



test, by adducing the example of Meleager, is from the speech of Phoenix, in the ninth book. Some other verses are imitated from Catullus' Nuptials of Peleus and Thetis. In that Epithalamium, Ariadne declares, that she would have attended Theseus as a slave, if her treacherous lover had conveyed her to his paternal mansions. Ovid has carried this farther, and makes Briseis willing to serve even the bride of Achilles :—

Victorem captiva sequar, non nupta maritum :  
 Est mihi, quæ lanas molliat, apta manus.  
 Inter Achæïadas longe pulcherrima matres  
 In thalamos conjux ibit (eatque) tuos.  
 Nos humiles famulæque tuæ data pensa trahemus,  
 Et minuent plenas stamina nostra colos.  
 Exagitet ne me tantum tua deprecor uxor,  
 Quæ mihi nescio quo non erit æqua modo.

This has become a common-place declaration in the mouths of deserted damsels. It appears in the Nut-Brown Maid, and in Prior's imitation of it—Henry and Emma :

This potent beauty, this triumphant fair,  
 The happy object of our different care,  
 Her let me follow, her let me attend  
 A servant,—she may scorn the name of friend.  
 What she demands, incessant I'll prepare ;  
 I'll weave her garlands, or I'll plait her hair.  
 My busy diligence shall deck her board,  
 For there at least I may approach my lord :  
 And when my Henry's softer hours advise  
 His servant's absence, with dejected eyes  
 Far I'll recede, and sighs forbid to rise.

4th.—Phædra to Hippolytus.

5th.—Ænone to Paris. This Trojan youth, having

been brought up as a shepherd on Mount Ida, fell in love with the nymph C  none, whom he forsook when Helen was promised to him by Venus, as a reward for bestowing on her the golden apple, in preference to Juno and Minerva. The deserted nymph upbraids him in this epistle with his inconstancy, and in order to rekindle his passion, she pathetically recalls to his recollection, the circumstances of their early attachment—artfully reminding him, at the same time, of the frailties of Helen, and predicting the ruin she would bring on his country and kindred.

6th.—Hypsipyle to Jason.

7th.—Dido to   neas. This is addressed by the unhappy Queen of Carthage to the Trojan chief on the eve of his departure, and while she already contemplated her own melancholy fate—

Sic, ubi fata vocant, udis abjectus in herbis,  
Ad vada M  andri concinit albus olor.

Some of the passages in this epistle have been closely imitated from the *  neid*.

8th.—Hermione to Orestes. Hermione, being united to Pyrrhus, against her inclination, urges her cousin Orestes, whom she preferred, and to whom she had been once affianced, to break her matrimonial bonds by the destruction of her husband.

9th.—De  anira pens this letter to Hercules, on hearing a report that he was about to expire, in consequence of having worn the robe which she had presented to him, and which had been dipped in the blood of the Centaur Nessus.

10th.—Ariadne to Theseus. A reader of Ovid is naturally led to compare this epistle with Catullus' Nuptials of Peleus and Thetis, of which the story of Theseus and Ariadne, though introduced as an episode, is in fact the principal subject. Ovid has mentioned the disordered person of his heroine—her sense of desertion, and her remembrance of the benefits she had conferred on Theseus : But the epistle is a cold production compared with the Epithalamium of the elder bard, chiefly because the grief of Ariadne is not immediately presented before us ; and she merely tells us that she had sighed, and wept, and raved. The minute detail into which she enters is inconsistent with her vehement passion. She recollects too well each heap of sand which retarded her steps, and the thorns on the summit of the mountain. Returning from her wanderings, she addresses her couch, and asks advice from it, till she becomes overpowered by apprehension for the wild beasts and marine monsters, of which she presents her false lover with a faithful catalogue. The story of Ariadne seems to have been a favourite one with Ovid. It is beautifully related in the first book of the *Art of Love*—in the third of the *Fasti*, where Ariadne deplores the double desertion of Theseus and Bacchus—and in the eighth book of the *Metamorphoses*, where the melancholy part of the tale is recalled to notice, in order to introduce the transformation of her crown into a star. Many of the details of Ariosto's story of Bireno and Olimpia have been copied from Ariadne's epistle. Bireno, Duke of Zealand, having espoused Olimpia,



daughter of the Count of Holland, embarks with her after the nuptials in order to return to his native country. But in the course of the voyage he lands on a desert island, and while Olimpia is asleep, he leaves her, and sets sail in the dark. The account of Olimpia awaking and finding herself alone—her rushing to the beach, and descrying from a promontory, by light of the moon, the departing sail of her lover—her complaints of the treachery of Bireno, and her address to the now forsaken couch, are almost literally translated from Ovid. As an example of the closeness of the imitation, I may cite the parallel passages in which the deserted nymphs find, on awakening, that they are left alone :—

Incertum vigilans, a somno languida, movi  
 Thesea prensuras semisupina manus.  
 Nullus erat : referoque manus, iterumque retento,  
 Perque totum moveo brachia : nullus erat.  
 Excussère metus somnum : conterrita surgo ;  
 Membraque sunt viduo præcipitata toro.<sup>1</sup>

Nè desta, nè dormendo, ella la mano  
 Per Bireno abbracciar stese, ma invano.  
 Nessuno trova, a se la man ritira ;  
 Di novo tenta, e pur nessuno trova ;  
 Di qua l'un braccia, e di à l'altro gira,  
 Or l'una or l'altra gamba, e nulla giova.  
 Caccia il sonno il timor, gli occhi apre, e mira,  
 Non vide alcuno. Or già non scalda, e cova  
 Piu le vedove piume ; ma si getta  
 Del letto, e fuor del padiglione in fretta.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> v. 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Orlando Fur.* Canto X. st. 21.

11th.—Canace to Macareus.

12th.—Medea, on hearing of Jason's nuptials with Creusa, upbraids him with his infidelity and ingratitude.

13th.—Laodamia to Protesilaus. This is one of the best written and most interesting epistles in the collection. While the Grecian fleet is detained at Aulis on its voyage to Phrygia, Laodamia addresses her husband Protesilaus, (a Thessalian Prince, who had led forty ships to Troy,) in terms of the most ardent affection, of the deepest regret for his absence, and the most fearful apprehensions for his safety.

14th.—Hypermnestra to Lynceus.

15th.—Sappho to Phaon. This is generally considered as the finest of the epistles, and is well known through the translation of Pope. It was happily enough imagined by Ovid to write an epistle in the name of Sappho, who herself had sung the delights and pains of love with more warmth and feeling than any writer of antiquity, and had described, in the most lively manner, all the violent symptoms attendant on that passion. It must, however, be confessed, that he has placed in the mouth of his heroine a greater number of well-turned panegyric epigrams, than of those tender and impassioned sentiments which were suitable to the character of Sappho, and had rendered her amorous sensibility so celebrated—

*Sume fidem et pharetram ; fies manifestus Apollo,  
Accedant capiti cornua ; Bacchus eris.*

The six remaining epistles, Paris to Helen—He-

len to Paris—Leander to Hero—Hero to Leander—Acontius to Cydippe, and Cydippe to Acontius, though they appear in the most ancient MSS. under the name of Ovid, along with the others, are of doubtful authenticity, and have been generally ascribed by commentators to Aulus Sabinus, a friend of Ovid, who was also the author of several answers to the epistles of our poet, as Ulysses to Penelope, and Æneas to Dido.

On the whole, the *Heroides* present us with some of the finest and most popular fictions of an amorous antiquity, resounding with the names of Helen, Ariadne, and Phædra. Julius Scaliger pronounces them to be the most polished of all the productions of Ovid.<sup>1</sup> But there is a tiresome uniformity in the situations and characters of the heroines. The injudicious length to which each epistle is extended has occasioned a repetition in it of the same ideas; while the ceaseless tone of complaint uttered by these forsaken damsels has produced a monotony, which renders a perusal, at least of the whole series of epistles, insupportably fatiguing. There is also a neglect of a due observance of the manners and customs of the heroic ages; and in none of the works of Ovid is his indulgence in exuberance of fancy so remarkable to the reader, because many of the epistles, as those of Penelope, Briseis, Medea, Ariadne, and Dido, lead us to a comparison of the Latin author with Homer, the Greek tragedians, Catullus, and Virgil,—those poets of true

<sup>1</sup> *Poet. Lib. VI. c. 7.*



simplicity and unaffected tenderness. "It would be a pleasing task," says Warton in his *Essay on Pope*, "and would conduce to the formation of a good taste, to show how differently Ovid and the Greek tragedians have made Medea, Phædra, and Deïanira, speak on the very same occasions. Such a comparison would abundantly manifest the fancy and wit of Ovid, and the judgment and nature of Euripides and Sophocles. If the character of Medea was not better supported in the tragedy which Ovid is said to have produced, and of which Quintilian speaks so advantageously, than it is in her epistle to Jason, one may venture to declare, that if this drama had survived, the Romans would not yet have been vindicated from their inferiority to the Greeks in tragic poesy."

A few imitations of the style of writing adopted by Ovid in his *Heroides*, and of which he was the inventor, have been attempted by the modern Latin poets of Italy. Of these, one of the earliest, by F. Maria Molza, is addressed, in name of Catherine of Arragon, to her husband Henry VIII. of England, from whom she had been divorced. Nic. Heinsius has written an answer for Æneas to Ovid's epistle of Dido. In the 16th century, there were many French translations of the Epistles of Ovid; and the translators frequently placed at the end of the volume some attempts of their own in a similar style of composition.<sup>1</sup> Fontenelle is the author of several epistles of a like description; but this species of writing has not

<sup>1</sup> Goujet, *Biblioth. Française*, T. V. c. 13.

been much cultivated either among the French or Italians. It has been frequently revived, however, in England—sometimes by choosing characters, in close imitation of Ovid, from the heroic or classical ages, but more frequently by selecting them from British history. This last method has been adopted by Drayton in his *England's Heroical Epistles*, where, among other letters, we have those which passed between King John and Matilda, Jane Shore and Edward IV., Surrey and Geraldine, Lady Jane Gray and Lord Guilford Dudley. These epistles are as full of conceits and far-fetched thoughts as the *Heroides*, but they exhibit more variety of sentiment than the work of Ovid. They are not all complaints of desertion and ill-requited love. Though Rosamond still possesses the heart of the monarch, penitence is the feeling which prevails in her epistle; and in that of Matilda, we have only the expression of indignation at the guilty love which had been proffered her. About the same time, Daniel wrote the epistle from Octavia to Antony, complaining of his love for Cleopatra. Lord Hervey, in more modern times, produced a series of heroic epistles, which have been inserted in Dodsley's collection—Monimia to Philocles, Flora to Pompey, Arisbe to Marius, (imitated from Fontenelle,) and Roxana to Usbek, which is founded on Montesquieu's Persian Letters. Fenton, who was a good versifier, and tolerable poet, and who translated Ovid's epistle from Sappho to Phaon, wrote an answer from Phaon to Sappho, in which the story of his transformation from an old decrepit mariner to a

beautiful youth, is agreeably related. But by far the most celebrated work of this description is Pope's *Eloisa to Abelard*, in which the various and conflicting tumults of passion are so admirably portrayed. The celebrity of this epistle produced innumerable responses from Abelard, and various other productions of a similar description, which swell the poetical miscellanies and albums of the last century.

The work of Ovid entitled *De Arte Amandi*, or more properly *Artis Amatoriæ Liber*, is written, like the *Amores* and *Heroides*, in the elegiac measure. There is nothing, however, elegiac in its subject, as it merely communicates in a light and often sportive manner, those lessons in the Art of Love, which were the fruits of the author's experience, and had been acquired in the course of the multifarious intrigues recorded in the *Amores*. This poem was not written earlier than the year 752; for the author mentions in the first book the representation of a sea-fight between the Greek and Persian fleets, which was exhibited at that period in the *Naumachia*, under the direction of Augustus. The whole work is divided into three books. The first two books are written for the guidance and direction of lovers in their pursuit of sensual gratifications. He instructs them in the best mode of seeking out an object worthy of their passion, and points to the fittest places for this search—the circus, theatres, baths, and temples. A mistress having been found, he next describes the arts by which she may be gained; and many of his pre-



cepts are such as we find from the *Amores* had been successfully practised by himself, especially the artifice of obtaining the favour of the waiting-maid who attended on the mistress he courted. Lastly, he shows how the affections of the fair, after they have been gained, may be secured and preserved. The third book is intended for the instruction of the other sex, who are here taught the various arts of coquetry, and the mode of concealing any defects in size or shape, by the advantages of dress. Our poet descends in his directions to the most minute circumstances; he exhausts the whole science of the toilette, and exhibits the colours which best suit with the complexions of the brown or the fair. Nor are elegant accomplishments, as singing, dancing, and a knowledge of poetry, neglected; but not a word is said of the dispositions of the mind, or the virtues of the heart. On the contrary, our author concludes with rules for the safe and successful management of an intrigue, (to which he thinks every woman naturally disposed,) without awakening the jealousy and suspicions of a husband or rival.

These are the professed objects of the poet; but he does not always adhere rigidly to his plan. The second book, in particular, where he designs to show a lover how a newly-acquired conquest may be secured, is extremely desultory. He reverts to the topics he had discussed in the former book, and introduces several ancient stories and fables not altogether apposite to his subject. It must be confessed, however, that, in general, his mythological episodes and

illustrations form the most agreeable part of the poem. They are told lightly and pleasantly, and have been happily selected from the immense archives of Grecian fable with which Ovid was so conversant. The work is also curious and useful, from the information it affords concerning Roman manners, and antiquities, in their lighter departments. Though not written in the tone or form of satire, it gives us nearly the same insight as professed satirical productions, into the minor follies of the Augustan age; and in this point of view may be regarded as an entertaining supplement to the works of Horace. Indeed, a late foreign writer has supposed, that, in the composition of the *Art of Love*, Ovid had no serious intention of giving lessons of seduction to men, or coquetry to females, but that, passing his time at Rome among dissolute youths and courtezans, he conceived the design of painting the manners of a frivolous and voluptuous capital, which he had such opportunities of accurately observing, and chose the subject of the art of love, as a frame in which to enclose his delineations, in preference to adopting either the tone of a satirist or a moral censor.<sup>1</sup> This, at least, may be safely concluded, that the work of Ovid did not in any degree tend to the corruption of the morals of his fellow-citizens, since the indulgence of every vice was then so licensed at Rome, that they could scarcely receive any additional stain; but this depravation of manners gave birth to the work of Ovid, suggested its pernicious

<sup>1</sup> *Charactere der Vornehmsten Dichter.* Leipsic, 1799.

counsels, and obtained for it the popularity with which it was crowned.

The book *De Remedio Amoris* is connected with that *De Arte Amandi*, and was written a short while after it. This poem discloses the means by which those who have been unsuccessful in love, or are enslaved by it to the prejudice of their health and fortune, may be cured of their passion. Occupation, travelling, society, and a change of the affections, if possible, to some other object, are the remedies on which the author chiefly relies. The work, on the whole, is not so pleasant and entertaining as the *De Arte Amandi*. It is almost entirely destitute of those agreeable episodes by which that poem is so much beautified and enlivened. It has fewer sportive touches, and fewer fascinating descriptions.

Both the *Art* and *Remedy of Love* abound in prodigality of wit, and even in those conceits which have been frequently supposed to be the characteristics of a certain class of Italian poets. But the truth is, that these writers have derived a great many of their conceits from the Roman poet, whom they often imitated in his passages of false wit and perverted taste. To give one example, Ovid says, in the book *De Arte Amandi* :—

Aurea nunc vere sunt sæcula : plurimus auro  
Venit honos : auro conciliatur amor.

And after him, Tasso, in his *Aminta* :—

E veramente il secol d'oro è questo,  
Poichè sol vince l'oro, e regna l'oro.



The whole poem *De Arte Amandi* has been imitated in Bernard's *Art d'Aimer*, and in King's *Art of Love*, who has adapted the precepts of the Roman to modern manners, and to English localities.

The *Metamorphoses* of Ovid had been composed by him previous to his exile. But he received the mandate for his relegation while yet employed in the task of correction, and when he had completed this labour only on the first three books. Finding himself thus condemned to banishment from Rome, he threw the work into the flames, partly from vexation and disgust at his verses in general, which had been made the pretext for his punishment, and partly because he considered it as an unfinished poem, which he could no longer have any opportunity or motive for perfecting.<sup>1</sup> Fortunately, however, some transcripts had been previously made by his friends of this beautiful production, which was thus preserved to the world.<sup>2</sup> After Ovid's departure from Rome, these quickly passed into extensive circulation; they were generally read and admired, and a copy was placed

<sup>1</sup> Carmina mutatas hominum dicentia formas ;

Infelix domini quod fuga rupit opus.

Hæc ego discedens, sicut bona multa meorum,

Ipse meâ posui mœstus in igne manu.

Vel quod eram Musas, ut crimina nostra, perosus,

Vel quod adhuc crescens et rude carmen erat.

*Tristia*, Lib. I. el. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Quæ quoniam non sunt penitus sublata, sed extant ;

Pluribus exemplis scripta fuisse reor.

*Ibid.*

in his library, which was still preserved and kept up by his family.<sup>1</sup> In the depths of his dreary exile, Ovid learned, perhaps not without satisfaction, that his work had been saved ;<sup>2</sup> and he even expressed a wish that some of his favourite passages might meet the eye of Augustus.<sup>3</sup> But he was annoyed by the recollection, that the poem would be read in the defective state in which he had left it.<sup>4</sup> He had no copy with him at Tomos, on which he could complete the corrections he had commenced at Rome. He, therefore, thought it necessary to apprise his friends in Italy, that the work had not received his last emendations ; and as an apology for its imperfections, he proposes that the six following lines should be prefixed as a motto to the copies of his *Metamorphoses*, which were then circulating in the capital :—

Orba parente suo quicunque volumina tangis ;  
 His saltem vestrâ detur in urbe locus.  
 Quoque magis faveas, non hæc sunt edita ab ipso,  
 Sed quasi de domini funere rapta sui.  
 Quicquid in his igitur vitii rude carmen habebit,  
 Emendaturus, si licuisset, erat.<sup>5</sup>

The *Metamorphoses*, therefore,—at least the twelve concluding books,—should be read with some degree

<sup>1</sup> *Tristia*, I. l. 118.

<sup>2</sup> Nunc precor ut vivant, et non ignava legentem  
 Otia delectent, admoneantque mei.

*Trist.* I. 6.

<sup>3</sup> *Tristia*, Lib. II. v. 557.

<sup>4</sup> *Tristia*, Lib. III. el. 14, v. 23.

<sup>5</sup> *Tristia*, Lib. I. el. 6.

of that indulgence which is given to the last six books of the *Æneid*; though, from what we see, in the perfected works of Ovid, it can hardly be supposed that even had he been permitted, he would have expunged conceits, and retrenched redundancies, with the pure taste and scrupulous judgment of the Mantuan bard.

In the composition of his *Metamorphoses*, Ovid can lay no claim to originality of invention. Not one of the immense number of transmutations he has recorded, from the first separation of Chaos till the apotheosis of Julius Cæsar, is of his own contrivance. They are all fictions of the Greeks,<sup>1</sup> and Oriental nations, interspersed, perhaps, with a few Latin or Etruscan fables. We even know the names of ten or twelve poets, grammarians, and rhetoricians, from the time of Alexander the Great to that of Augustus, who had collected the histories of *Metamorphoses* under the title *Μεταμορφώσεις* or *Ἑτεροιώσεις*. Not long before the time of Ovid, Parthenius, the preceptor of Virgil, and friend of Gallus, wrote a Greek poem on *Metamorphoses*, which is no longer extant, but to which Ovid is believed to have been particularly indebted; and the fable of Erisichthon, introduced in the eighth book, may still be found in Callimachus' hymn to Ceres. In fact, a book of *Metamorphoses* which were feigned by the poet himself, would have possessed no charm, being unauthorized by public belief, or even that

<sup>1</sup> Totum transformationum argumentum transtulit e Græcis.—

Scaliger, *Poet. Lib. VI.*



species of popular credulity which bestows interest and probability on the most extravagant fictions. And indeed Ovid had little motive for invention, since, in the relations of those who had gone before him in this subject, he could enter the most extensive field ever opened to the career of a poet. All things capable of change which had existed, or were supposed to have existed, from the creation to his own time, in heaven or in earth, in waters under the earth, or in depths of hell, were fit subjects furnished for his discursive muse; and it is universally admitted, that he has shown excellent judgment in selecting, from the stores which had been preparing and heaped up for ages, those treasures of Fancy, which were best calculated to awaken interest, or sympathy, or terror.

The *Metamorphoses* of Ovid are introduced by a description of the primeval world, and the early changes it underwent. All that he writes of Chaos is merely a paraphrase of what he had found in the works of the ancient Greeks, and is more remarkable for poetic beauty than philosophic truth or consistency. The account of the creation, which is described with impressive brevity, is followed by a history of the four ages of the world—the war with the giants—Deucalion's deluge, and the self production of various monsters in those early periods, by the teeming and yet unexhausted earth. This last subject leads to the destruction of the serpent Python, by Apollo, and the institution of the Pythian games in honour of his victory: at their first celebration, the conquerors were crowned with oak—the laurel being unknown till the

transformation of Daphne, when it became the prize of honour and renown. Our poet thus glides into the series of his *Metamorphoses*, which are extended to fifteen books, and amount in all to not less than two hundred and fifty. The stories of this description related by Ovid's predecessors were generally insulated, and did not hang together by any association or thread of discourse. But the Roman poet continues as he had commenced, and like the Cyclic writers of Greece, who comprehended, in one book, a whole circle of fables, he proceeds from link to link in the golden chain of fiction, leading us, as it were, through a labyrinth of adventures, and passing imperceptibly from one tale to the other, so that the whole poem forms an uninterrupted recital. In themselves, however, the events have frequently no relation to each other;<sup>1</sup> and the connexion between the preceding and succeeding fable often consists in nothing more than that the transformation occurred at the same place, or at the same time, or had reference perhaps to the same amorous deity.

In such an infinite number, the merit of the stories must be widely different; but I may mention, as among the best, the fables of Cephalus and Procris—of Philemon and Baucis—of Hippomanes and Atalanta—the flight of Dædalus and Icarus—the loves of Pyramus and Thisbe. But of the whole, the story of Phaëton is perhaps the most splendid and highly

<sup>1</sup> “ Les liaisons de ses fables,” says Huet, “ qu’on me faisoit admirer dans mon enfance, sont froides et tirées par les cheveux.”

*Huetiana.*

poetical. It has been objected, however, to the *Metamorphoses*, that, however great may be the merit of each individual tale, there is too much uniformity in the work as a whole, since all the stories are of one sort, and end in some metamorphosis or other.<sup>1</sup> But this objection, if it be one, can lie only against the choice of the subject, for if a poet announces that he is to sing of bodies changed and converted into new forms, what else than metamorphoses can be expected? Besides, in the incidents which lead to these transformations, there is infinite variety of feeling excited, and the poet intermingles the noble with the familiar, and the gay with the horrible or tender. Sometimes, too, the metamorphosis itself seems a mere pretext for the introduction of the story, and occupies a very inconsiderable portion of it. The blood which flowed from Ajax, when he slew himself in a transport of indignation, because the arms of Achilles were adjudged to Ulysses, produced a hyacinth, and on this feeble stem the poet has grafted the animated and eloquent speeches of the contending Grecian chiefs. In the tragic history of Pyramus and Thisbe, the lovers themselves are not metamorphosed, but the fruit of the mulberry tree, under which their blood was shed, assumes a crimson dye.

It would be endless to point out, in detail, the blemishes and beauties of such an extensive work as the *Metamorphoses*. The luxuriance of thought and expression, which pervades all the compositions of Ovid,

<sup>1</sup> Kames' *Elements of Criticism*, Vol. I. c. 9.



prevails likewise here; but his comparisons are pleasing and appropriate, and his descriptions are rich and elegant, whether he exhibits the palace of the Sun, or the cottage of Philemon. As examples of his talent in this department, may be cited, his pictures of the golden age, of the stag slain by Cyparissus, the court of the river god Peneus, and the fountain in which Narcissus beheld the fatal reflection of his own beautiful form—

Fons erat illimis, nitidis argenteus undis,  
Quem neque pastores, neque pastæ monte capellæ  
Contigerant, aliudve pecus; quem nulla volucris,  
Nec fera turbârat, nec lapsus ab arbore ramus.  
Gramen erat circa, quod proximus humor alebat;  
Sylvaque, sole lacum passura tepescere nullo.

Sometimes, however, his descriptions are too luxuriant and ornamental, approaching to the style which in this country has been recently called *Darwinian* :

——— Ecce vigil rutilo patefecit ab ortu  
Purpureas Aurora flores, et plena rosarum  
Atria, &c.

The many interesting situations displayed in the *Metamorphoses* have formed a mine for the exertions of human genius in all succeeding periods—not merely in the province of narrative fable,<sup>1</sup> but in the de-

<sup>1</sup> See Cowley's *Pyramus and Thisbe*, Fontaine's *Philemon et Baucis*, Liv. XII. Fab. 28.) and *Les Filles de Minée*, (Liv. XII. Fab. 29,) which contains the story of Pyramus and Thisbe, as also of Cephalus and Procris. In the *Lai de Narcisse*, one of the

partment of the drama and fine arts; and no work, with exception of the sacred Scriptures, has supplied so many and such happy subjects for the pencil.

The Greek books, from which the *Metamorphoses* were chiefly taken, having been lost, the work of Ovid is now the most curious and valuable record extant of ancient mythology. It would be difficult to reduce every story, as some writers have attempted, into a moral allegory;<sup>1</sup> it would be impossible to find in them, with others, the whole history of the Old Testament, and types of the miracles and sufferings of our Saviour, or even the complete ancient history of Greece, systematically arranged;<sup>2</sup> but it cannot be denied, that the *Metamorphoses* are immense archives of Grecian fable, and that beneath the mask of fiction, some traits of true history—some features of ancient manners and the primeval world, may yet be discovered.

In this point of view, the *Fasti* of Ovid, though written in elegiac, and not in heroic measure, may be considered as a supplement, or continuation of the *Metamorphoses*. Its composition was commenced at Rome, by the author, previous to his exile. The work

Fabliaux of the Trouveurs, the classical story is much amplified and enriched (Le Grand and Way's *Fabliaux*, Vol. II. p. 31.) *Narcisso al Fonte* is also one of the beautiful fables of Pignotti, (Fav. 30.)

<sup>1</sup> Garth, *Pref. to Translation*.

<sup>2</sup> See an account of the writers who have maintained these different theories in Müller, *Einleitung*, T. IV. p. 163. &c. Fabricius, *Bib. Lat.* T. I. p. 447. Goujet, *Bib. Franc.* T. VI. p. 16. 52.

was corrected and finished by him at Tomos,<sup>1</sup> and was thence sent to Rome, with a prefatory dedication to the great Germanicus. The plan of this production was probably suggested by the didactic poem which Callimachus had published under the title of *Ἀντιχ*, in which he feigns that, being transported to Helicon, he was there instructed by the Muses in the nature and origin of various religious usages and ancient ceremonies. It would appear that, before the time of Ovid, some vague design of writing a poem of this description had been entertained by Propertius.—

Sacra diesque canam, et cognomina prisca locorum ;  
Has meus ad metas sudet oportet equus :<sup>2</sup>

But Ovid in his *Fasti* executed the work which Propertius did not live, or perhaps found himself unable, to accomplish. In the Latin language, the word *Fasti* originally signified, in opposition to *Nefasti*, the days on which law proceedings could be legally held, or other ordinary business transacted ; and thence it came, in course of time, to denote the books or tables on which the days in each month accounted as *Fasti* or *Nefasti* were exhibited. The term at length was applied to any record digested in regular chronological order, as the *Fasti Consulares* ; and with Ovid it signifies the anniversaries of religious festivals, of dedications of temples, or of other memorable events, indicated in the calendar, under the name of *Dies Fasti*, and which, in general, belonged, in the ancient meaning, to the class of *Dies Nefasti*, rather than *Fasti*.

<sup>1</sup> *Fasti*, Lib. IV. v. 81.

<sup>2</sup> *Eleg.* Lib. IV. 1.



C. Hemina and Claudius Quadrigarius had given histories of these festivals in prose : but their works were dry and uninteresting ; and Ovid first bestowed on the subject the embellishments of poetry and imagination. The object of the *Fasti* of Ovid is to exhibit, in regular order, a history of the origin and observance of the different Roman festivals, as they occurred in the course of the year ; and to associate the celebration of these holidays with the sun's course in the zodiac, and with the rising or setting of the stars. A book is assigned to each month, but the work concludes with June. The six other books, which would have completed the Roman calendar, may have perished during the middle ages : but it seems more probable that they never were written. No ancient author or grammarian quotes a single phrase or word from any of the last six books of the *Fasti* ; and, in some lines of the *Tristia*, the author himself informs us that the composition had been interrupted :

Sex ego Fastorum scripsi totidemque libellos,  
Cumque suo finem mense volumen habet :  
Idque tuo nuper scriptum sub nomine, Cæsar,  
Et tibi sacratum sors mea rupit opus.<sup>1</sup>

This subject itself does not afford much scope for the display of poetic genius. Its arrangement was prescribed by the series of the festivals, while the proper names, which required to be so often introduced, and the chronological researches, were alike unfavourable to the harmony of versification.

The *Fasti*, however, is a work highly esteemed by

<sup>1</sup> *Trist.* II. 549.

the learned on account of the antiquarian knowledge which may be derived from it. The author has poured a rich and copious erudition over the sterile indications of the calendar—he has traced mythological worship to its source, and explained many of the mysteries of that theology, which peopled all nature with divinities. Even Scaliger, whose opinions are generally so unfavourable to Ovid, admits the ancient and extensive erudition displayed in the *Fasti*.<sup>1</sup> In particular, much mythological information may be obtained from it, as to the points in which the superstitions and rites of the Romans differed from those of the Greeks, and also the manner in which they were blended. “The account,” says Gibbon, “of the different etymologies of the month of May, is curious and well expressed : We may distinguish in it an Oriental allegory, a Greek fable, and a Roman tradition.”

Some truths concerning the ancient history of Rome may be also elicited from the *Fasti*. It may appear absurd to appeal to a poet in preference, or contradiction, to annalists and chroniclers ; but it must be recollected, that these annalists themselves originally obtained many of their facts from poetical tradition. Ovid, besides, had studied the Registers of the Pontifex Maximus, which are now lost, and which recorded, along with religious observances, many historical events—

<sup>1</sup> “Eruditio prisca et multa.” (*Poet. Lib. VI. c. 7.*) “In Fastorum libris,” says Harles, “in quibus sacra, antiquitatem, et cæremonias Romanorum descripsit, sterilem materiem adeo fecundavit, ut sub manibus ejus messis surgeret lætissima.” (*Introduct. in Notit. Literat. Roman. T. II. p. 448.*)

*Sacra recognosces annalibus eruta priscis.*

Occasional light may therefore be thrown by the *Fasti* of Ovid, on some of the most ancient and dubious points of Roman story. For example, our poet completely vindicates Romulus from the charge of having slain his brother in a momentary transport of passion. Remus was legally sentenced to death, in consequence of having violated a salutary law, enacted by the Founder of Rome, and which in an infant state it was requisite to maintain inviolably.

But, perhaps, the *Fasti* are chiefly curious and instructive, as exhibiting in their fullest extent the extravagancies to which, even in a state of high civilization, the human mind is liable. The whole nation is purified with the husk of a bean, the blood of a horse, and the ashes of a calf consumed on the altar of Vesta ; and this nation not a tribe of wild Indians or wandering Scythians, but the “Gens Togata” and “Domini Rerum.” The superstitious ceremonies, which are detailed, lose, however, somewhat of their ridicule from the manner in which they are recorded by the poet. It has been said, that Virgil, in his *Georgics*, scatters the manure with dignity ; and in like manner, Ovid’s genius exalts the most absurd and useless practices. “It ennobles,” says Gibbon, “even the nine black beans thrown behind the back, to which he gives an air of solemnity and even of sublimity. He chiefly employs that doubtful and faint colouring which renders objects more terrible by showing them partially and confusedly : Silence, obscurity, the shadow which follows us with light steps, and which we dare not



look behind us to see—all these touches belong to that kind of sublimity which is well pointed out by Burke. The temple of Jupiter, the Avenger, must have been magnificent." Gibbon had studied the *Fasti* of Ovid with great care, and perhaps I may be here permitted to quote the reflections which occurred to him on the perusal. "The following," says he, "are some of the faults in the character either of the poet or of his subject, which it is painful to perceive. 1st. Ovid appears to me defective in point of strength and elevation; and his genius loses in depth, what it gains in surface. In painting nature, his strokes are vague, and without character. His expression of the passions is rarely just; he is sometimes weak, sometimes extravagant, always diffuse; and though he continually seeks the road to the heart, is seldom fortunate enough to find it. His light and tender character, softened by pleasure, and rendered more interesting by misfortune, made him acquainted with the tones of sadness and joy. He knows how to lament the misery of a forsaken mistress, or to celebrate the triumphs of a successful lover. But the great passions are above his reach; fury, vengeance, the fortitude or ferocity of the soul, which either subdues its most impetuous movements, or precipitates their unbridled career. His heroes think more of the reader than of themselves; and the poet, who ought to remain concealed, is always ready to come forward, and to praise, blame, or pity them. 2d. Ovid was ignorant of the rules of proportion, rules so necessary to a writer, who would give to each sentiment its due extent, and ar-

range it in its proper place, agreeably to its own nature, and the end for which he employs it. In Ovid, you may perceive thoughts the most interesting, and narratives closely connected with the very essence of his subject, pass away lightly without leaving a trace behind; while he dwells with complacency on parts merely ornamental, frivolous, or superfluous. Can it be believed, that the rape of Proserpine should be described in two verses, when the enumeration of the flowers which she gathered in the garden of Enna, had just filled sixteen? I acknowledge, that the subject of the *Fasti* exposed him to faults in proportioning the parts of his work. That subject is connected with the whole of the Greek mythology; it contains also much of the Roman history. It was sometimes necessary to relate the whole fable; at other times, to hint at, or even to suppose it, was sufficient. It was requisite for him to decide how far each story was likely to be known by an ordinary reader, and how much the knowledge of it contributed to that of his subject: but the principles of such decisions are extremely delicate. 3d. Some writers have praised Ovid for the artfulness of his transitions, in a work so various as that of the *Metamorphoses*. Yet this subject, without possessing the unity of Epic poetry, supplied him with very natural principles of connexion. But the *Fasti* is a subject totally disjointed. Each ceremony and each festival is altogether distinct from that which follows it, and which follows it only by an imaginary chronology. The poet always traces the æra of their institution, which falls, if you will, on

the month of January ; but they are Januaries of different years, or rather of different centuries. Ovid was so sensible of this defect in his subject, that he endeavours to associate festivals on the earth with the phænomena of the heavens, in order to give a connexion more real, but extremely uninteresting, to his calendar. 4th. Ovid heard from the mouth of the gods the laws of their worship, the origin and principle of each fable, and of each ceremony. Such is the nature of the human mind ; even in fiction we require the appearance of truth. We cannot bear to see the poet's invention at work. But Ovid shows to us too plainly, that all his ingenious conversations with the gods are the work of his own brain. When he speaks seriously, as he once does in mentioning Vesta, it is to overturn the whole fanciful fabric at one blow. I acknowledge that a Roman poet must have been perplexed by the perpetual mixture of the serious with the fantastic, and by a poetical religion which was also that of the state. Among the early Greeks, the inspiration of Homer did not differ from that of Calchas. His works, and those of his successors, were the scriptures of the nation. With us, on the other hand, the inspiration of poets is merely a transient and voluntary illusion, to which we submit ourselves. But among the Romans, who alternately believed in and laughed at their gods, but who had no faith whatever in their poets, the part of these last was very difficult to act. 5th. I ought not to reckon the employment of elegiac verse as a particular fault, though heroic measure would have been well adapted to the



subject of the *Fasti*. Elegiac verse has always tired me. The pause constantly recurs on the middle of the third foot of the pentameter ; and the sense must always be included in a couplet. This monotony fatigues the ear ; and causes the introduction of many useless words, merely for the sake of the measure. There is far more variety, liberty, and true harmony in the flow of heroic verse.”<sup>1</sup> While Gibbon, however, gives us this long catalogue of faults and blemishes, he mentions several passages which had afforded him peculiar pleasure, as the origin of sacrifices, and the origin of the name of May. “The issuing,” says he, “of the gods from chaos, and the majesty of Olympus arranging the celestial hierarchy, is sublimely extravagant. The dispute of the goddesses to give their name to the month of June is more pleasing, from being borrowed from that which Paris decided on Mount Ida. Juno’s speech is also cast in the same mould with that in the first book of the *Æneid* ; but the amiable Hebe expresses herself with those graces that are peculiar to Ovid.”<sup>2</sup> To these passages may be added the origin of the Floralia,<sup>3</sup> the expulsion of the kings from Rome,<sup>4</sup> the Megalensian games,<sup>5</sup> and, above all, perhaps, the beautiful fable of Anna Perenna. This nymph was the sister of Dido, and, after the death of that unfortunate queen, was obliged to fly from Carthage. She was

<sup>1</sup> *Miscellaneous Works*, IV. p. 355.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* Vol. V. p. 452.

<sup>3</sup> *Fasti*, V. v. 159, &c.

<sup>4</sup> II. 685.

<sup>5</sup> IV. 179.

carried by the winds and waves to an unknown coast—that coast was Italy! She perceived two men walking on the shore—these men were Æneas and his faithful Achates! Anna is overwhelmed with terror at the sight of him whom she regarded as the murderer of her sister; but the Trojan chief consoles her, takes her to his palace, and presents her to Lavinia, in whom, he assures her, she will find another sister. Lavinia, however, suspected that she might prove a rival, and meditated her destruction. One night, the shade of the unhappy Dido appeared to her in a dream, and warned her of the danger. The affrighted Anna fled from the palace of Æneas, and while attempting to escape, was drowned in one of the small lakes or fountains formed by the river Numicus. She was long sought in vain, but her voice was at length heard, announcing that she was hid in the perennial stream, and that she had therefore assumed the name of Anna Perenna. When the Roman people, having retired to the Mons Sacer, were in want of provisions, an old woman, with white hair, daily brought new baked bread to the famished citizens. She was afterwards discovered to be the beneficent Anna, to whom a statue was now erected, and a festival celebrated, near the fountain where she had been lost, the waters of which were supposed to confer long life on the drinkers. On the ides of March the Roman people resorted in crowds to its margin, and reclining on the green sward, quaffed long draughts of health, and youth, and pleasure—

Plebs venit, ac virides passim disjecta per herbas  
 Potat, et accumbit cum pare quisque suâ.  
 Sub Jove pars durat ; pauci tentoria ponunt :  
 Sunt, quibus e ramo frondea facta casa est :  
 Pars ibi pro rigidis calamos statuere columnis ;  
 Desuper extentas imposuere togas.  
 Sole tamen vinoque calent ; annosque precantur  
 Quot sumant Cyathos, ad numerumque bibunt.  
 Invenies illic, qui Nestoris eibat annos ;  
 Quæ sit per calices facta Sibylla suos.  
 Illic et cantant, quidquid didicere theatri,  
 Et jactant faciles ad sua verba manus ;  
 Et ducunt posito duras cratera choreas,  
 Cultaque diffusis saltat amica comis.  
 Cùm redeunt, titubant ; et sunt spectacula vulgo ;  
 Et fortunatos obvia turba vocant.  
 Occurri nuper : visa est mihi digna relatu  
 Pompa ; senem potum pota trahebat anus.

This fable, concerning a fountain, of which the streams could prolong life or preserve the bloom of youth, descended, like many other classical fictions, to the middle ages, and indeed has been almost as universal as the desire of health and longevity. There is a fountain of this quality in the Greek romance of *Ismene and Ismenias*, which was written about the beginning of the twelfth century—In the German *Helmbuch*, or *Book of Heroes*—in the French *Fabliau de Coquaigne*, and the continuation of *Huon of Bourdeaux*.

The circumstances of the melancholy exile of Ovid gave occasion to the last of his works—the *Tristia*, and the *Epistolæ e Ponto*. The first book of the



*Tristia*, containing ten elegies, was written by Ovid at sea, during his perilous voyage from Rome to Pontus;<sup>1</sup> and is chiefly occupied with the occurrences at his departure from the capital, the storms he encountered, and the places he saw, in the course of his navigation. The remaining four books were composed during the first three years of his gloomy residence at Tomos. In the second book, addressed to Augustus, he apologizes for his former life and writings. In some of the elegies of the third, fourth, and fifth books, he complains to himself of the hard fate he had suffered in being exiled from Italy to the inhospitable shores of Pontus: in others he exhorts his correspondents at Rome, to endeavour to mitigate the anger of Augustus, and obtain his recall. The names, however, of the friends and patrons whom he addresses, are not mentioned,<sup>2</sup> since, during this time, his re-

<sup>1</sup> Carmina secessum scribentis et otia quærent;

Me mare, me venti, me fera jactat hyems.

*Tristia*, I. 1. 42.

\* \* \* \* \*

Aut hanc me, gelidi tremorem cum mense Decembris,

Scribentem mediis Hadria vidit aquis:

Aut, postquam bimarem cursu superavimus Isthmon;

Alteraque est nostræ sumta carina fugæ.

*Tristia*, Lib. I. el. 10.

I doubt, however, if all the elegies in the first book were written during the voyage. He speaks in the sixth of copies of his *Metamorphoses* being circulated at Rome, and it is not likely that he could receive this intelligence while on his way to Pontus.

<sup>2</sup> Scis bene cui dicam, positus pro nomine signis;

Officium nec te fallit, amice, tuum.

*Tristia*, Lib. I. el. 4. 7.

latives and acquaintances were afraid lest they should incur the displeasure of Augustus, by holding any communication with the unhappy exile.<sup>1</sup> At the end of three years, this apprehension, which, perhaps, had been all along imaginary, was no longer entertained; and accordingly the epistles which he wrote from Pontus, during the remainder of his severe sojourn, are inscribed with the names of his friends, among whom we find the most distinguished characters of the day.—Fabius Maximus, who, since the deaths of Mæcenas and of Agrippa, had been the chief confidant of Augustus—the consuls Græcinus and Sextus Pompey—the poets Cornelius Severus, Æmilius Macer, and Albinovanus—Those who bore, in that age, the names of Brutus and Atticus, and the two surviving sons of the great Messala. These elegiac epistles differ from the *Tristia* merely in the poet's correspondents being addressed by name, instead of receiving no appellation whatever, or being only mentioned under some private and conventional title. The subjects of the four books of epistles from Pontus are precisely the same with those in the *Tristia*—complaints of the region to which the poet had been banished, and exhortations to his friends to obtain his recall—

<sup>1</sup> Sed timor officium cautus compescit; et ipsos  
In nostro poni carmine nolle puto.

*Tristia*, Lib. III. el. 4.

Neve metu falso nimium trepidate, timentes  
Hâc offendatur ne pietate deus.

*Tristia*, Lib. I. el. 4.

Non minus hoc illo triste quod ante dedi:  
Rebus idem, titulo differt; et epistola cui sit  
Non occultato nomine missa docet.<sup>1</sup>

From the first line of the *Tristia*—

Parve, nec invideo, sine me, liber, ibis in urbem—

to the last of the epistles from Pontus—

Non habet in nobis jam nova plaga locum—

the lyre of the exiled bard sounds but one continued strain of wailing and complaint. All the melancholy events of his former life are recalled to his recollection, and each dismal circumstance in his present condition is immeasurably deplored. But he speaks of his old age, mortifications, and sorrows, with such touching and natural eloquence, and in a tone so truly mournful, that no one can read his plaintive lines without being deeply affected. He now felt the griefs he expressed, and thus found a road to the heart, which in his happier hours he had sought for in vain. His words are here the overflowings of real affliction, of a wounded spirit, and an almost broken heart—not the light imaginary effusions of the jealous queens, or love-sick nymphs of the *Heroides*. How affecting are his lamentations on leaving his home, his wife, and his friends!—

Uxor in æternum vivo mihi viva negatur,  
Et domus, et fidæ dulcia membra domûs;  
Quosque ego paterno dilexi more sodales—<sup>2</sup>

as also the melancholy idea of dying on a foreign

<sup>1</sup> *Ep. e Ponto*, I. ep. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Trist. Lib. I. 3. 63.*



shore, far from the last consolations which they might have afforded :—

Tam procul, ignotis igitur moriemur in oris ;  
 Et fient ipso tristia fata loco ?  
 Nec mea consueto languescent corpora lecto ?  
 Depositum nec me qui fleat ullus erit ?  
 Nec dominæ lacrymis in nostra cadentibus ora  
 Accedent animæ tempora parva meæ ?  
 Nec mandata dabo ? nec cum clamore supremo  
 Labentes oculos condet amica manus ?  
 Sed sine funeribus caput hoc, sine honore sepulchri  
 Indeploratum barbara terra teget ?<sup>1</sup>

How sweet is the commencement of the letter to his daughter Perilla !—

Aut illam invenies dulci cum matre sedentem,  
 Aut inter libros Piëridasque suas—<sup>2</sup>

and how tender his notion of holding a little holiday at Pontus, on the anniversary of the birth of his wife !—

Quæque semel toto vestis mihi sumitur anno,  
 Sumatur fatis discolor alba meis.  
 Araque gramineo viridis de cespite fiat ;  
 Et velet tepidos nexa corona focos.  
 Da mihi thura, puer, pingues facientia flammæ,  
 Quodque pio fusum stridat in igne merum.  
 Optime natalis, quamvis procul absumus, opto  
 Candidus huc venias, dissimilisque meo.  
 Hæc igitur lux est ; quæ si non orta fuisset,  
 Nulla fuit misero festa videnda mihi.<sup>3</sup>

And then, when he assumes a somewhat higher tone,

<sup>1</sup> *Trist.* Lib. III. 3.    <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* Lib. III. 7.    <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* Lib. V. 5.

how eloquent and pathetic are his earnest intercessions with Augustus:—

Per Superos igitur, qui dent tibi longa, dabuntque,  
 Tempora, Romanum si modo nomen amant;  
 Per patriam, quæ te tuta et secunda Parente est;  
 Cujus, ut in populo, pars ego nuper eram;  
 Sic tibi, quem semper factis animoque mereris,  
 Reddatur gratæ deditus urbis amor:  
 Sic assueta tuis semper Victoria castris  
 Nunc quoque se præstet, notaque signa petat:  
 Ausoniumque ducem solitis circumvolet alis;  
 Ponat et in nitidâ laurea sarta comâ.  
 Parce precor; fulmenque tuum, fera tela, reconde,  
 Heu nimium misero cognita tela mihi!  
 Parce, pater patriæ; nec nominis immemor hujus  
 Olim placandi spem mihi tolle tui.<sup>1</sup>

The panegyrics too on the emperor (except when the poet falls into the bad taste of addressing him as a god) are in the happiest style of courtly and well-applied compliment. Thus, while praising his clemency, he says—

Tu veniam parti superatæ sæpe dedisti,  
 Non concessurus quam tibi victor erat.  
 Divitiis etiam multos et honoribus auctos  
 Vidi, qui tulerant in caput arma tuum.  
 Quæque dies bellum, belli tibi sustulit iram.<sup>2</sup>

and when applauding his justice—

Principe nec nostro deus est moderatior ullus.  
 Justitiâ vires temperat ille suos:

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<sup>1</sup> *Tristia*, Lib. II. v. 155.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* v. 43.

Nuper eam Cæsar facto de marmore templo,  
Jampridem posuit mentis in æde suæ.<sup>1</sup>

Such is the effect, indeed, of writing under the influence of deep feeling, that, even when he indulges in his old habit of fabulous and mythological allusion, he writes with much more freedom and simplicity than in the *Heroides* or *Amores*. The comparison he draws between his own sufferings and those endured by Ulysses, is equally admirable for the beauty of the thoughts, and delightful flow of the versification:—

Ille habuit fidamque manum, sociosque fideles :  
Me profugum comites deseruère mei.  
Ille suam lætus patriam victorque petebat :  
A patriâ fugio victus et exul ego.  
Nec mihi Dulichium domus est, Ithaceve, Sameve ;  
Pœna quibus non est grandis abesse locis :  
Sed quæ de septem totum circumspicit orbem  
Montibus, imperii Roma Deûmque locus.  
Illi corpus erat durum patiensque laborum :  
Invalidæ vires ingenuæque mihi.  
Ille erat assiduè sævis agitatus in armis :  
Assuetus studiis mollibus ipse fui.  
Denique quæsitos tetigit tamen ille penates,  
Quæque diu petiit, contigit arva tandem  
At mihi perpetuò patriâ tellure carendum est,  
Nî fuerit læsi mollior ira dei.<sup>2</sup>

The only elegies in which Ovid quits even for a moment this tone of complaint, are those where he celebrates the victories of Tiberius in Germany, and the commencement of a poem on the return of spring,

<sup>1</sup> *E Ponto*, Lib. III. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Tristia*, Lib. I. 4.



which contains the sole lines in the *Tristia* that give any indication of a mind soothed by the improving season, or the reviving charms of nature,—

Frigora jam zephyri minuunt, annoque peracto,  
 (Longior antiquis visa Mæotis hyems,)  
 Jam violam puerique legunt hilaresque puellæ,  
 Rustica quam nullo terra serente gerit;  
 Prataque pubescunt variorum flore colorum,  
 Indocilique loquax gutture vernat avis;  
 Utque malæ crimen matris deponat hirundo,  
 Sub trabibus cunas parvaque tecta facit:  
 Herbaque quæ latuit Cerealibus obruta sulcis  
 Exserit e tepidâ molle cacumen humo;  
 Quoque loco est vitis de palmite gemma movetur.<sup>1</sup>

Our poet, however, enjoys but a momentary respite from his sorrows; and before the conclusion of the elegy, he relapses into bitter lamentations. And not only are his complaints ceaseless, but he reiterates the same images and illustrations. He three times compares himself to Ulysses, and the number of his misfortunes is repeatedly assimilated to whatever is most abundant in nature—the fish in the sea, or the sand on the shore. He also perpetually attempts to console himself, by recollecting how many persons had become known and eminent chiefly by their misfortunes. Sometimes even the same line is reiterated. The verse—

Non habet in nobis jam nova plaga locum—

occurs oftner than once. When his poetical epistles

<sup>1</sup> *Tristia*, Lib. III. 12.

arrived and were read at Rome, this monotony was principally objected to them by the critics,—

Nil nisi me terrâ fruar ut propiore rogare,  
Et quam sim denso cinctus ab hoste queri.<sup>1</sup>

Ovid admits that there are many faults in his epistles, but, in the true spirit of an author and a poet, he maintains that this was the least objectionable of all,

Nil tamen e scriptis magis excusabile nostris,  
Quam sensus cunctis pænè quod unus inest.<sup>2</sup>

Indeed it must be acknowledged, that he has defended himself against the charge with considerable success. The frame of his mind, and his gloomy abode, naturally led him to utter complaints; and as the epistles were addressed to different persons for the purpose of obtaining their aid in hastening his recall, it was essential that his unfortunate situation should be made known to each friend whom he successively solicited:—

Et tamen hæc eadem cùm sint, non scribimus isdem;  
Unaque per plures vox mea tentat opem.  
An, ne bis sensum lector reperiret eundem,  
Unus amicorum, Brute, rogandus erat?<sup>3</sup>

And even amid these repetitions we find a constant interest in the extraordinary situation of the most refined and elegant man of his age,—the poet of love, the courtier of Augustus, the friend of Messala,—thrown

<sup>1</sup> *E Ponto*, Lib. III. 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

for the space of seven years amongst a horde of barbarians. From their novelty too, there is a charm in Ovid's freezing pictures of winter scenes, and bleak regions, as we but seldom meet with such descriptions in those Greek and Latin poets, who sung on the banks of Tiber and Ilissus, or on the shores of Naples and Ionia. Add to this, that during his long residence in the wilds of Scythia, he still preserved in his last compositions the perfect purity of the Latin language; and above all let it be remembered, that neither the *Tristia* nor epistles from Pontus, are stained with one spot of that moral corruption which disfigures the poems produced by him in the sunshine of prosperity. Hence it may be charitably hoped, that his afflictions had in some degree purified his heart, and that, however bitter his exile, it was good for him to have been so chastened.

Voltaire is of opinion, that instead of wailing on the shores of Pontus, and kissing the rod of the tyrant who crushed him, it would have been more manly to have passed over to the milder clime of Ecbatana, and become the slave of the Persian king. But Ovid detested the Persians, and the horror which he felt at the presence of the Getæ was partly occasioned by their wearing breeches like that barbarous nation. If Ovid has given anything like a true picture of the region to which he was banished, and of the hardships he there suffered, he had but too much reason for the complaints he uttered. Of all the trials to which the human heart is exposed, there appears to be none more dif-



ficult to support with dignity, than a state of exile : and when we recollect the lamentations of Cicero—a republican, a statesman, and philosopher—when only expelled from Italy, and residing in Macedonia under the protection of a Roman governor, we, perhaps, need not be very severe in our reprehension of the weakness of a lover, a courtier, and a poet, who was driven at one blow from civilized society to the farthest recesses of the globe.

During his exile Ovid appears to have been much indebted to the kindness and commiseration of the friends whom he had left behind him at Rome. A few, however, with whom he had been bound in ties of the closest intimacy, not only neglected him during his banishment, but attempted to despoil him of the patrimony, which he still retained by the compassion of the emperor. The conduct of one who had been his warmest friend in prosperity, and became his bitterest foe in adversity, prompted him, while at Tomos, to dip his pen in the gall of satire, from which, during a long life, he had meritoriously abstained. Ovid was a successful poet—he had no detractors among his fellow-citizens ; and that laurel wreath, which is usually reserved for the skull of the poet, was placed on his living brow. This favourable reception which he had experienced from his countrymen, and the mildness of his own nature, left him no wish for indulgence, either in sportive or indignant satire : and in the wilds of Scythia he remembers, with proud satisfaction, that no one but himself had suffered from his Muse :

Non ego mordaci distinxī carmine quenquam ;  
 Nec meus ullius crimina versus habet :  
 Candidus a salibus suffusus felle refugi ;  
 Nulla venenato littera mista joco est :  
 Inter tot populi, tot scripti millia nostri,  
 Quem mea Calliope læserit unus ego.

The friend, now changed to foe, whose altered conduct drove our poet to pen a vehement satire, is generally supposed to have been Hyginus, the celebrated mythograph, and at this time the keeper of the imperial library. Ovid, however, does not name his enemy, but execrates him under the appellation of Ibis. Callimachus having had a quarrel with Apollonius Rhodius, satirized him under the name of Ibis, an unclean Egyptian bird, and hence Ovid bestowed it on Hyginus, who, though a native of Spain, had gone in early youth to Egypt, and was brought by Augustus from Alexandria to Rome. He had offended our poet, by attempting to persuade his wife to accept another husband, and by soliciting the emperor to confiscate his property, with a view of having it bestowed on himself. The poem which Ovid directed against this selfish and ungrateful friend cannot, perhaps, be properly termed a satire ; being a series of curses, in the style of the *Diræ* of Valerius Cato. They are of such a description, that, compared with them, the Anathemas of Ernulphus, and Curse of Kehama, may be considered as benedictions. Some of the lines possess terrific energy—

Terra tibi fruges, amnis tibi deneget undas ;  
 Sisque miser semper, nec sis miserabilis ulli :  
 Causaque non desit, desit tibi copia mortis !

There is such a string of these imprecations, many of which are inconsistent with each other, and their fulfilment impossible in the same person, that I can scarcely help considering the *Ibis* as a sport of fancy, in which the poet had ransacked his imagination for every species of calamity which could be denounced against an enemy. The whole is summed up with this climax—

Denique Sarmaticas inter Geticasque sagittas,  
His precor ut vivas et moriari locis.

Besides the works of Ovid which yet remain entire, and which have now been fully enumerated, there are fragments still extant from some poems of which he is reputed to be the author.<sup>1</sup> The *Halieuticon*, which is much mutilated, is attributed to Ovid, on the authority of the elder Pliny, who says, that he has told many wonderful things concerning the nature of fishes in his *Halieuticon*.<sup>2</sup> and we find in Pliny the names of several fishes, which are not mentioned by any other author, but perhaps were natives of the sea on the shore of which Ovid commenced this poem towards the close of his life. Notwithstanding this authority, Wernsdorf is of opinion, that it was not written by Ovid, as it is not found in any MS. of his works; and he assigns it to Grätius Faliscus, a contemporary of Ovid, to whose *Cynegeticon* it bears

<sup>1</sup> The fragments were first published from a MS. which had been in the possession of Sannazzarius.

<sup>2</sup> *Hist. Nat. Lib.* XXXII. c. 2.



a remarkable resemblance in point of style, and is usually comprised in the same MSS. with that production. If it be the work of Ovid, it would appear, from the expressions of Pliny, that he had never completed it; and at present it seems to be defective even in the commencement.<sup>1</sup> As the name imports, it is a poem on fish and fishing; and as it now exists, begins with showing, that every sentient being is inspired with some instinct, or provided with some arms, for its own protection; which leads the poet to describe the various exertions or contrivances of the different kinds of fish to escape the hook or net of the fisherman. Before commencing his piscatory instructions, he shows, that some fishes inhabit the deep seas, while others swim near the shore; and the fragment concludes with a dry catalogue of the latter species. This work of Ovid was imitated by Oppian in his *Halieutika*.

Ovid also wrote a poem *De Medicamine Fuciei*, as we learn from two lines in his *Art of Love*—

Est mihi, quo dixi vestræ Medicamina formæ,  
Parvus, sed curâ grande libellus opus.

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<sup>1</sup> Hier. Columna, in the notes to his edition of Ennius, (p. 153.) published a passage, consisting of more than a hundred lines, which he believed to be part of the commencement of Ovid's *Halieuticon*. He says that it had been communicated to him by the learned antiquary Sertorius Quadrimanus, who had himself copied it from an ancient MS. But it is now generally believed to be a production of the middle ages. Wernsdorf attributes it to Nemesianus.—*Poet. Lat. Min.* T. I. p. 147.

It is doubted, however, if the fragment under this title be the genuine work of Ovid.

During his residence at Tomos, Ovid acquired a perfect knowledge of the language which was there spoken. The town had been originally founded by a Greek colony, but the Greek language had been gradually corrupted, from the influx of Getæ, and its elements could hardly be discovered in the jargon now employed. Ovid, however, composed a poem in this barbarous dialect, which, if extant, would be a great philological curiosity. The subject he chose was the praises of the imperial family at Rome. When completed, he read it aloud in an assembly of the Getæ; and he paints, with much spirit and animation, the effect it produced on his audience; though, I suspect, the barbarians are indebted to the poet for the fine turn of expression in the last distich—

Hæc ubi non patriâ perlegi scripta camœnâ,  
 Venit et ad digitos ultima charta meos;  
 Et caput, et plenas omnes movêre pharetras,  
 Et longum Getico murmur in ore fuit:  
 Atque aliquis—Scribas hæc cùm de Cæsare, dixit,  
 Cæsaris imperio restituendus eras.

After what has been already said of the different works of Ovid in succession, it is unnecessary to detain the reader with any general remarks on his defects or merits. These, indeed, are now pretty generally understood, and justly appreciated. The brilliancy of his imagination,—the liveliness of his wit,—his wonderful art in bringing every scene or image

distinctly, as it were, before the view,<sup>1</sup> and the fluent unlaboured ease of his versification, have been universally admired. But his wit was too profuse, and his fancy too exuberant. The natural indolence of his temper, and his high self-esteem,<sup>2</sup> did not permit him to become, like Virgil or Horace, a finished model of harmony and proportion. The labour of correction, as he himself confesses, he could not endure—

Sæpe piget (quid enim dubitem tibi vera fateri)  
Corrigere, et longi ferre laboris opus :

And a story, related by Seneca, the rhetorician, shows his overweening self-conceit and blindness to his own defects.<sup>3</sup> Three critical friends, having perused one of his productions, requested him to amend or strike out three verses, which they thought objectionable and inferior to the rest. Ovid consented, on condition that he should be allowed to except three lines, which he would on no account either change or part with. The critics wrote down those three verses which they wished to be expunged, and the poet the same number which he insisted on retaining; and when the lines were compared, they proved to be the same. One of them was,—

<sup>1</sup> “Quando egli narra,” says Tiraboschi, “o describe alcuna cosa, pare che l’abbia sotto degli occhi, e qual egli la vide, tale la rappresenta a chi legge; sicchè sembri a lui pure di averla presente allo sguardo”—*Stor. Dell. Letter. Ital.* T. I. part. 3. Lib. III.

<sup>2</sup> Nimium amator ingenii sui.—Quintil. *Inst. Orat.* Lib. X. c. 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Controvers.* Lib. II. 10.



Semibovemque virum, semivirumque bovem ;  
and another—

Egelidum Boream, egelidumque Notum.

Ovid, no doubt, had previously heard, that these lines were particularly objected to; and while stipulating in favour of three favourite verses, he was probably well aware that these were the three which his critics meant to denounce. One of the censured lines, however, it would appear, he had ultimately consented to correct, since it now stands in the MSS. and printed editions—

Et gelidum Boream, præcipitemque Notum.<sup>1</sup>

Every one is acquainted with the writings of Virgil, Horace, Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid; but a very inadequate notion would be formed of the poetical genius of the Augustan age, and of the extent to which it flourished during that period, if it were supposed to have been confined to these illustrious bards. I have, indeed, little doubt, that those poets whose works are still extant were by far the greatest of their time; but many whose writings have now perished, (though their genius may have been of inferior magnitude,) added lustre to the constellation.

Of these, the great proportion were elegiac writers. In this age, the elegy seems to have held the same place as the sonnet in modern Italy. The noblest

<sup>1</sup> *De Arte Amandi.*

poets did not disdain it, and those who could write nothing else ventured on a strain appropriated to the expression of sentiments which every one felt, and therefore conceived himself capable of describing.

Though the works of

#### CORNELIUS GALLUS

have almost all perished, he ranked among the chief elegiac writers of Rome, and has been compared by Quintilian with Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid. Gallus was born of poor and ignoble parents,<sup>1</sup> in the year of Rome 685. Forum Julium is said to have been the place of his birth,<sup>2</sup> but there were two towns of that name within the boundaries of the Roman empire. The one, since called Friuli, lay within the district of that name, which at present forms the north-eastern corner of the Venetian territory—the other, (now Frejus in Provence,) was situated on the southern coast of the Roman province of Gallia Narbonensis. Some writers have fixed on the former as the birth-place of Gallus,<sup>3</sup> but a greater number have maintained that he was a native of Frejus.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ex infimâ fortunâ provectus.—Sueton. *In August.* c. 66.

<sup>2</sup> *Chronic. Euseb.*

<sup>3</sup> *Hist. Literar. Aquileiensis*, Lib. I. 8.—Liruti, *Notiz. dell' Vite ed Opere de Letterati de Friuli*, T. I. p. 2.—Tiraboschi, *Stor. dell. Letterat. Ital.* T. I. Parte III. Lib. III. c. 1.

<sup>4</sup> *Hist. Litter. de la France*, par les Benedictins.—Fuhrman, *Handbuch der Class. Litter.* p. 286.—Schœll, *Hist. de la Litterat.*

The Eusebian Chronicle is the authority which places his birth at Forum Julium; but owing to a corruption in some of the MSS. of that chronicle, Forum Livii being substituted in its room, a few writers have supposed that he was born at that town, now Forlì, in the Romagna.<sup>1</sup>

From the obscurity of his birth and of his original situation, little is known concerning the early years of Gallus. He is first mentioned in history as accompanying Octavius, when he marched to Rome, after the battle of Modena, to demand the consulship. He had soon so far ingratiated himself with this leader, that we find him among the number of his advisers after the battle of Philippi, and counselling him, along with Mæcenas, to write in gentle terms to the senate, with assurances that he would offer no violence to the city, but would regulate all things with clemency and moderation. On the partition of the lands, which followed the defeat of Brutus, Gallus was appointed to collect, from the cantons on the banks of the Po, a tribute which had been imposed on the inhabitants, in place of depriving them of their lands.

When the young Triumvir became the undisputed master of the western half of the Roman empire, he raised Gallus to the highest honours of the state; and when he meditated the appropriation of the eastern

Rom.—Harles, *Introduct. in Not. Lit. Rom.* T. I. p. 333.—Müller, *Einleitung*, T. II. p. 232.

<sup>1</sup> Flavius Blondus, *Ital. Illustrata*.—Morgagni, *Opusc. Miscell.*



half likewise, he invested him with an important military command. After the battle of Actium, he was opposed to Antony in person, on the invasion of Egypt; and while Augustus took possession of Pelusium, its eastern key, Gallus was employed to make himself master of Parætonium, which was considered as its western barrier.<sup>1</sup>

Gallus proved eminently successful in this enterprise. He thwarted all the attempts of Antony to shake the fidelity of the soldiers, many of whom had at one time served under that leader; and by a skilful stratagem he surprised and destroyed a number of vessels which belonged to his adversary.

When Augustus, having at length encamped near Alexandria, received intelligence that Antony had laid violent hands on himself, he despatched Proculeius to the city, in order, if possible, to save the treasures, and get Cleopatra alive into his power. But she refused to confer with this emissary, otherwise than from within the monument she had constructed—Proculeius standing without the gate, which was strongly barred. Having heard her proposals, and observed the situation of the place, Proculeius returned, and made his report to Augustus. It was then that Gallus undertook to perform a part still more perfidious and despicable. He advanced to the gate of the monument, and contrived to lengthen out a conference with the queen, till Proculeius, in the meanwhile, having fixed his scaling ladders to the walls, entered the

<sup>1</sup> Dio Cassius.

tower by one of the windows, and then descended to the gate where Cleopatra was discoursing with his coadjutor. She immediately turned round from Gallus, and seeing that she was thus surprised, attempted to stab herself, but Proculeius wrested the dagger from her hands.<sup>1</sup>

Egypt having been reduced to complete submission, its conqueror directed his whole attention towards the administration of its internal affairs. Its importance as the granary from which Italy derived the chief supplies of corn—its wealth, its population, and the levity of its inhabitants, all contributed to render this recent acquisition a subject of much care and solicitude to Augustus. He considered it inexpedient to allow any native assembly or council to meet. He even thought it dangerous to permit any authority to be exercised over this realm by the Roman senate; and he accordingly took into his own hands the whole administration, which, on his return to Rome, he determined to devolve on a viceroy, supported by a great military force stationed in different parts of the kingdom. Gallus was the person whom he first invested with this prefecture;<sup>2</sup> and his long-trying fidelity, his attachment to his master, and his talents for conciliation, gave every prospect of a government which would be exercised with advantage to the prince who trusted him, and the people who were confided to his

<sup>1</sup> It will be recollected that this transaction forms a chief incident in the last act of Shakspeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*.

<sup>2</sup> Dio Cassius, Lib. LI.

care; and so long as he acted under the direction of Augustus, he manifested no defect either in capacity or zeal. He opened new conduits from the Nile, and caused the old channels to be cleared; he restored the rigour of the laws, protected commerce, and encouraged arts; and he founded another Alexandrian library, the former magnificent collection of books having been accidentally burned in the time of Julius Cæsar. By these means, Egypt for a while enjoyed, under the government of Gallus, a prosperity and happiness to which she had long been a stranger during the sway of the Ptolemies. But the termination of the rule of this first prefect of Egypt did not correspond to its auspicious commencement. Elated with power, he soon forgot the respect that was due to his benefactor. He ascribed everything to his own merit—erecting statues to himself throughout all Egypt, and engraving a record of his exploits on the pyramids. In unguarded hours, and when under the influence of the double intoxication of prosperity and wine, he applied to his master the most opprobrious and insulting expressions.<sup>1</sup> Indiscretion and vanity were quickly followed by acts of misgovernment and rapine. He plundered the ancient city of Thebes, and stripped it of its principal ornaments;<sup>2</sup> and he is even said, though on no very certain authority, to

<sup>1</sup> Dio Cassius, Lib. LIII.

Nec fuit opprobrio celebrâsse Lycorida Gallo;

Sed linguam nimio non tenuisse mero.

Ovid, *Tristia*, Lib. II. v. 445.

<sup>2</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus, XVI. 4.



have filled up the measure of his offences by conspiring against the life of the emperor.

In consequence of his misconduct, and of those unguarded expressions, which were probably conveyed to his master, with exaggeration, by some false friend or enemy, he was recalled, in the fifth year of his government; and immediately after his return to Rome, one of his most intimate friends, called Largus, stood forth as his accuser. Augustus, in the meanwhile, forbade him his presence;<sup>1</sup> and the charges, which now multiplied from every quarter, were brought before the senate. Though Gallus had many friends among the poets, he had few among the senators. No one could refuse verses to Gallus; but a fair hearing was probably denied him. He was sentenced to perpetual exile, and his whole property was confiscated.<sup>2</sup> Unable to endure the humiliation, which presented such a contrast to his former brilliant fortune, he terminated his existence by a voluntary death. This sad conclusion to his once prosperous career took place in 727, when he was in the 43d year of his age. Augustus is said to have mourned the death which his severity had thus occasioned: and Suetonius, in the *Life of that emperor*, has described the feelings which he expressed on receiving intelligence of his melancholy fate. But his sorrow probably was not sincere; and, if we may believe Donatus, he ungenerously carried his resentment so far beyond the tomb, as to com-

<sup>1</sup> Ob ingratum et malevolum animum, domo et provinciis suis interdixit.—Sueton. *in August.* c. 66.

<sup>2</sup> Dio Cassius, Lib. LIII.

mand Virgil to expunge an eulogy on Gallus, which he had introduced near the conclusion of the *Georgics*, and to substitute in its place the story of Aristæus and the Bees, which, however beautiful in itself, does not compensate for the loss of the poet's delineation of an eminent friend, by whom he was warmly patronised, and whom, in return, he sincerely loved :

—Cujus amor tantum mihi crescit in horas,  
Quantum vere novo viridis se subjicit alnus.<sup>1</sup>

The guilt or the misfortunes of Gallus as a statesman, have been long since forgotten, and he is now remembered only as a distinguished patron of learning, and as an elegant poet. Gallus was the friend of Pollio and Mæcenas, and rivalled them, through life, as an eminent promoter of the interests of literature. He protected Parthenius Nicenus, a Greek author, who had been brought to Rome during the Mithridatic war, and who inscribed to him his collection of amorous mythological stories, entitled, *Περὶ ἐρωτικῶν παθημάτων*, declaring, in his dedication, that he addressed the work to Gallus, as likely to furnish incidents which might be employed by him in the poems he was then writing. But Gallus is best known to posterity as the patron of Virgil, whom he introduced to the notice of Mæcenas, and was also instrumental in obtaining for him restitution of his farm, after the partition of the lands among the soldiery.<sup>2</sup> In gratitude for these and other favours conferred on him,

<sup>1</sup> *Eclog.* 10.

<sup>2</sup> Probus, *Vita Virgilii*.

the Mantuan bard has introduced an elegant compliment to Gallus in the sixth eclogue; and has devoted the tenth to the celebration of his passion for Lycoris. In the former of these pastorals, Silenus, when caught and bound by the shepherds, sings, among other topics, Gallus wandering on the banks of the poetical stream Permessus. He describes him as conducted by one of the Muses to the presence of Apollo on the Aonian mountains, where the whole assemblage of gods and poets arise to greet his approach; and Linus bestows on him the pipe which of old belonged to Hesiod:—

Tum canit, errantem Permessi ad flumina Gallum  
 Aonas in montes ut duxerit una sororum;  
 Utque viro Phoebi chorus assurrexerit omnis;  
 Ut Linus hæc illi, divino carmine pastor,  
 Floribus atque apio crines ornatus amaro,  
 Dixerit: Hos tibi dant calamos, en accipe, Musæ,  
 Ascræo quos antè seni; quibus ille solebat  
 Cantando rigidas deducere montibus ornos.  
 His tibi Grynæi nemoris dicatur origo:  
 Ne quis sit lucus, quo se plus jactet Apollo.

The tenth eclogue is entirely occupied with Gallus and his passion for Lycoris. The poet represents him under the character of a forsaken shepherd, complaining of the cruelty of his mistress, while the rural deities, with Apollo himself, deplore the hard usage he had experienced, and condole with him in his misfortunes: and, by an exaggeration not altogether consistent either with the usual simplicity or exquisite taste of the poet, he extends the sympathy to the trees and stones,—



illum etiam lauri, etiam flevêre myricæ ;  
 Pinifer illum etiam solâ sub rupe jacentem  
 Mænalus, et gelidi flevêrunt saxa Lycæi.

Gallus himself then takes up the song. He fervently wishes he had been born, and had passed his life, in Arcadia ; and the verses in which he paints the rural happiness he might there have enjoyed with Lycoris are in the happiest manner of the sweetest of poets :—

Hic gelidi fontes, hîc mollia prata, Lycori,  
 Hic nemus, hîc ipso tecum consumerer ævo.

Disappointed in these fond illusions, he forms various resolutions, which are hastily adopted, and as speedily abandoned. But finding at length, that none of the employments or amusements to which he had recourse, could avail in curing his passion, he concludes that love is invincible, and that he must yield to the powerful god,—

Omnia vincit amor, et nos cedamus amori.

Those elegies which placed Gallus in the same rank of poets with Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid, were written in praise of this Lycoris, for whom he felt so ardent a passion. Her real name is said to have been Cytheris.<sup>1</sup> She was an actress of Mimes, who, to exquisite beauty joined all the accomplishments of her profession. Besides having engaged the affections of Gallus, she had captivated Antony, and is said in

<sup>1</sup> Servius, *ad Virgil. Eclog. 10.*

her earlier years to have touched the heart of Brutus.<sup>1</sup> The passion of Gallus may be supposed to have been at its height, when Virgil wrote his 10th eclogue, in 716, at which period Gallus was about thirty years of age. At this time Cytheris had forsaken him for a rival, who was then engaged in a military expedition on the other side of the Alps, and she had even accompanied her new lover to that inhospitable region :—

Tu procul a patriâ, nec sit mihi credere tantum !  
Alpinas, ah dura, nives et frigora Rheni  
Me sine sola vides.<sup>2</sup>—

The elegies of Gallus consisted of four books, but they have now all perished ;<sup>3</sup> they were held, however, in high estimation so long as they survived. Ovid speaks of Tibullus as the successor of Gallus, and as his companion in the Elysian fields ;<sup>4</sup> and he oftner than once alludes to the extensive celebrity which his

<sup>1</sup> Cytheridem Mimam cum Antonio et Gallo amavit Brutus.  
Aurelius Victor, *De Vir. Illust.*

<sup>2</sup> Virgil. *Eclog.* 10.

<sup>3</sup> The four elegies which were first published in the year 1500, by Pomponius Gauricus, as the work of Cornelius Gallus, are generally supposed to have been written by Maximianus Gallus, a barbarian, who lived in the reign of Anastasius. They are chiefly filled with complaints of the miseries and deprivations of extreme old age, a theme not likely to be chosen by Gallus, who died at the age of forty-two. Aldus Manutius, the son of Paullus, published another elegy under the name of Asinius Gallus, the son of Pollio, whom he appears to have confounded with Cornelius Gallus. Though superior to the others in point of poetical style, it has no better claims to authenticity.

<sup>4</sup> *Amores*, Lib. III. cl. 9.

verses had procured for himself as well as his mistress :—

Gallus et Hesperiiis, et Gallus notus Eoïs ;  
Et sua cum Gallo nota Lycoris erit.<sup>1</sup>

Quintilian ranks him as an elegiac poet with Tibullus and Propertius, though he thinks his style was somewhat harsher than that of either. Besides the four books of elegies, Gallus translated or imitated from the Greek of Euphronion, a poem on the Grynean Grove, written in the manner of Hesiod. In this grove, which stood near Clazomenæ, a city of Asia, there was a temple with an oracle of Apollo ; and Virgil, in his sixth eclogue, (written probably while Gallus was engaged in the composition of this poem,) pays him the elegant compliment, That if he sing the origin and history of the Grynean oracle on the pipes of Hesiod, there will be no grove in which the god of poetry will thenceforth more delight. He likewise translated from the same Euphronion a number of ancient mythological fables, as the stories of Scylla and Philomela—

Omnia quæ, Phœbo quondam meditante, beatus  
Audiit Eurotas.—

Gallus also wrote a number of epigrams. One of these, which was first published by the younger Aldus Manutius, is much in the style of that amatory exaggeration which distinguishes the epigrammatists of the time, and which we have already remarked in

<sup>1</sup> *Amor*, Lib. I. el. 15.



the verses of Calvus, Lutatius Catulus, and Valerius Ædituus :—

Occurris cùm mane mihi, ni purior ipsâ  
 Luce novâ exoreris, Lux mea, dispeream !  
 Quodsi nocte venis, (jam vero ignoscite, divi,)  
 Talis ab occiduis Hesperus exit aquis.<sup>1</sup>

Though scarcely a vestige of the writings of Gallus remains, his name is still celebrated. “The praises,” says Berwick, “bestowed on him by his contemporaries, particularly Virgil, have survived, and made posterity at the distance of near two thousand years anxious to hear his story. In vain did Augustus endeavour to suppress his fame—in vain did imperial resentment strive to obstruct his reputation. His name as a poet still lives, though his works, which gave celebrity to that name, have totally perished.”

#### ALBINOVANUS.

Pedo Albinovanus, the contemporary and friend of

<sup>1</sup> When you meet me at dawn, may I perish, my fair,  
 If the pure light of morning with you can compare ;  
 When you seek me at evening, (forgive me, ye gods,)  
 Hesper shines not more bright o’er his watery abodes.

I had thought that the style of amatory adulation, employed by the Latin epigrammatists, could not have been surpassed, till I met with the following lines, in the eclogues of our old English poet Drayton :

*Motto.* Why doth the sun against his kind,  
 Stay his bright chariot in the skies ?  
*Perkin.* He pauseth, almost stricken blind  
 With gazing on her heavenly eyes.

Ovid, who addresses to him one of his epistles from Pontus, was also an elegiac poet; but though Ovid styles him "Sidereus Peto,"<sup>1</sup> an epithet expressive of his brilliancy and loftiness, he appears to have been generally ranked in the second class of elegiac writers—being accounted inferior to Tibullus, Propertius, Ovid, and Gallus. Little is known concerning the events of his life. His family derived their name from Alba Nova, the place of their origin, but our poet resided at Rome. He was a man of blameless life and manners, and an admirable story-teller.<sup>2</sup> Crinitus informs us, that he was still living in the reign of Tiberius, and Joseph Scaliger affirms, that he was the friend and secretary of that emperor; but this has been called in question by Burman, who thinks it was another person of the same name, who stood so high in imperial favour.

Albinovanus was unquestionably a writer of elegies; but there seems no sufficient authority for attributing to him the three elegiac productions still extant, which usually pass under his name. These are the consolatory poem addressed to Livia, on the death of her son Drusus, the brother of Tiberius—the elegy on the death of Mæcenas, and that on Mæcenas Dying. The two elegies on Mæcenas are evidently the productions of a barbarous period of Latin poetry; but the *Consolatio ad Liviam*, though it per-

<sup>1</sup> *E Ponto*, Lib. IV. ep. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Pedonem Albinovanum narrantem audieramus (erat enim fabulator elegantissimus) habitasse se supra domum Sp. Papinii, &c. Senec. *Epist.* 122.

haps may not be the work of Albinovanus, has been universally admired, and is neither unworthy of his name nor of the age in which he lived. Livia's fond anticipation of the safe and triumphal return of her favourite son, are affectingly portrayed, as also the general grief manifested at his funeral obsequies, rendered more melancholy by the long series of deaths which had occurred in the imperial family. The elegy is chiefly devoted to the panegyric of Drusus, but with his praises those of Livia as a wife, an empress, and a mother, are also conjoined.

Besides his elegies, Albinovanus was the author of a heroic poem on the exploits of Theseus, to which Ovid refers in his epistle to him from Pontus. It may be also inferred from a line in Martial, that he had written some epigrams or short poems of an epigrammatic description.<sup>1</sup>

When Tibullus laments his own inability to describe Messala's actions according to their merit, he introduces<sup>2</sup> to our acquaintance a poet whose genius and virtues entitled him to the friendship and esteem of Mæcenas, Messala, and Horace. This writer was

#### TITUS VALGIUS RUFUS,

whom Horace mentions among the number of those whose approbation he was most anxious to secure,<sup>3</sup> and whom Tibullus considered little inferior to Homer as an epic poet :—

<sup>1</sup> Lib. II. ep. 77.

<sup>2</sup> *Panegyri. ad Messal.* v. 179.

<sup>3</sup> *Sat. Lib. I.* 10. v. 82.



Est tibi qui possit magnis se accingere rebus  
Valgius : æterno proprior non alter Homero.<sup>1</sup>

Valgius excelled also in elegiac composition, and made the death of an amiable son the subject of some of his plaintive strains. Horace addressed to him a beautiful ode on the occasion, and the grief which the father suffered for the loss of such a son, must have been considerably alleviated by the correspondent feelings of such a friend.<sup>2</sup> Towards the conclusion, Horace exhorts him to cease the elegiac strain, inviting him to resume the epic trumpet, and sound the exploits of Cæsar.

There appear to have been two poets who bore the name of Macer, during the Augustan age, both of considerable note, and both friends of Ovid. The elder, called

#### ÆMILIUS MACER,

who was born at Verona, was of greater age than Ovid, though he sometimes condescended to read his works to his youthful friend :—

Sæpe suas volucres legit mihi grandior ævo,  
Quæque nocet serpens, quæ juvet herba, Macer.<sup>3</sup>

These works, as the above lines imply, were poems on birds and serpents, and on the virtues of different sorts

<sup>1</sup> *Panegy. ad Messal.* v. 179.

<sup>2</sup> *Lib. II. od. 9.*

<sup>3</sup> *Tristia, Lib. IV. el. 10.*

of herbs.<sup>1</sup> They were written in hexameters, and were chiefly translated from Nicander, a Greek poet of Colophon. Macer also composed a piece, entitled *Theriaca*, on wild animals, from which Isidorus and others have saved about half-a-dozen of verses. Nonius Marcellus adds, that he wrote a *Theogony*, from which he cites a single line. He also published a book on the subject of Bees;<sup>2</sup> but it is not certain whether this work was in prose or in verse.

Tibullus inscribed one of his elegies to this Macer,<sup>3</sup> on occasion of his setting out on some military expedition. It would appear that, at his departure from Rome, Macer had boasted that, however deeply he seemed involved in the snares of love, yet his heart was free, and that he now panted only for military fame. But Tibullus addresses Cupid, bids him follow Macer to the field, and threatens, that if he did not bring him back, he would himself desert the service of love, and forget his fondness for the fair, amid the various duties of a soldier. It is probable that Macer never returned from this expedition, since, according to the Eusebian Chronicle, he died in 737, during the consulate of Turnius and Silanus.

As his death took place in that year, he must be a different poet from the Macer to whom Ovid addressed one of his epistles from Pontus, which was not written till after his banishment to that country,

<sup>1</sup> The poem *De Viribus Herbarum*, which at present passes under the name of Macer, was the work of one Odo, a physician in the Middle Ages.

<sup>2</sup> Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* Lib. XI.

<sup>3</sup> Lib. II. el. 6.

in 762. With this second Macer Ovid had travelled in his youth through the different cities of Asia and Sicily :—

Te duce magnificas Asiæ perspeximus urbes ;  
Trinacris est oculis te duce nota meis.<sup>1</sup>

Macer was the author of one of those numerous poems on the Trojan war, which went under the name of *Homeri Paralipomena*.

Tu canis æterno quicquid restabat Homero,  
Ne careant summâ Troïca bella manu.<sup>2</sup>

In this poem he followed the historic order of events, beginning with the departure of the expedition from Greece, and ending with the commencement of the wrath of Achilles—<sup>3</sup> intermingling with the heroic part of the composition a great number of love adventures, as those of Paris and Helen, of Protesilaus and Laodamia, which occurred previous to the siege of Troy, or immediately after its commencement.<sup>4</sup>

#### LUCIUS VARIUS

was one of the most eminent poets of the Augustan age. He had been present in his youth at the battle of Philippi, and had afterwards joined Sextus Pompey in Sicily. Nevertheless, he was patronised by Mæcenas, to whose notice he first introduced Ho-

<sup>1</sup> *E Ponto*, Lib. II. ep. 10.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Vulpius, *ad Tibul.* Lib. II. el. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Ovid, *Amores*, Lib. II. el. 18.



race ; and he accompanied that minister on his celebrated journey to Brundisium.<sup>1</sup> Previous, indeed, to the appearance of the *Æneid*, he was considered as the first epic poet of Rome, or at least equal to Valgius. At the time when Virgil was chiefly known as a pastoral poet, Horace says of him—

———— Forte epos acer,  
Ut nemo, Varius ducit—<sup>2</sup>

and he also considered him as the writer who was most worthy to celebrate in heroic verse the exploits of Agrippa—

Scriberis Vario fortis, et hostium  
Victor, Mæonii carminis alite.<sup>3</sup>

At a subsequent period, when Virgil had become more distinguished, he mentions Varius along with him as a representative of the best class of poets in the Augustan age—

Cæcilio Plautoque dabit Romanus ademptum  
Virgilio, Varioque ?<sup>4</sup>

His eminence as an epic poet, and his friendship with Virgil, procured him the distinction of being appointed by Augustus along with Tucca to revise the *Æneid*, and bring it before the public.

<sup>1</sup> Nec sua Virgilio permisit numina soli  
Mæcnas : tragico quatientem carmina cæstu  
Evexit Varium.—*Panegy. ad Pisonem.*

<sup>2</sup> *Satir. Lib. I. 10. 43.*                      <sup>3</sup> *Od. Lib. I. 6.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ars Poet. v. 54.*

Varius was the author of a panegyric on Augustus ; but it was probably some longer work which procured him such celebrity as an epic poet, though it is not known what was the name or subject of this production. It is somewhat remarkable, however, that Quintilian, in his review of the Latin poets, in the tenth book of his Institutes, does not mention Varius as an epic writer, and only alludes to him as the author of the tragedy called *Thyestes*. The following verses, quoted by Macrobius from his poem *De Morte*, must either have been imitated by his friend Virgil, or borrowed from Virgil by him :—

Vendidit hic Latium populis, agrosque Quiritum  
Eripuit : fixit leges pretio, atque refixit.

The corresponding lines of Virgil are in the 6th book of the *Æneid* :—

Vendidit hic auro patriam, dominumque potentem  
Imposuit : fixit leges pretio, atque refixit.

Another fragment of Varius, from the same poem, is a fine description of a staghound, which appears to have been introduced as a *simile*—

Ceu canis umbrosam lustrans Gortynia vallem,  
Si veteris potuit cervæ comprehendere lustra,  
Sævit in absentem ; et circum vestigia lustrans  
Æthera per nitidum tenues sectatur odores.  
Non amnes illam medii, non ardua tardant,  
Perdita nec seræ meminit decedere nocti.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Even so some shady vale the Cretan hound  
Ranges, if she the hind's deep haunt hath found ;

This last line has also been copied by Virgil in his 8th eclogue—

Talis amor Daphnim, qualis, cū fessa juvenum  
Per nemora atque altos quærendo bucula lucos,  
Propter aquæ rivum viridi procumbit in ulvâ,  
Perdita nec seræ meminit decedere nocti.

### PONTICUS,

a poet also of this age, is commemorated in the *Tristia*;<sup>1</sup> and one of the elegies of Propertius is addressed to him.<sup>2</sup> He wrote, in hexameter verse, the *Thebaid*, or history of the wars between the rival brothers Eteocles and Polynices. Not a line of this production is preserved to us, and, in consequence, it is impossible to say how far Statius may have profited by it in his poem on the same subject. Neither Ponticus nor his works are mentioned by any writer subsequent to his own time; but Propertius, in the elegy above mentioned, ventures to suggest a comparison between his friend and Homer.

Of the remaining poets of this period, it will be suf-

Eager the tracks she traces round the lair,  
And follows still the odour on the air;  
Nor streams her course retard, nor Alpine height—  
Desperate she roves, nor quits the chase with night.

<sup>1</sup> Lib. IV. el. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Dum tibi Cadmeæ dicuntur, Pontice, Thebæ,  
Armaque fraternæ tristia militiæ;  
Atque, ita sim felix, primo contendis Homero,  
Sint modo fata tuis mollia carminibus.

Lib. I. el. 7.



ficient to mention the names of Rabirius, who wrote a poem on the battle of Actium—of Carus, who celebrated the exploits of Hercules—Largus, who chose for his subject the establishment of Padua by Antenor—Fontanus, who sung the amours of the Naiads and Satyrs, and Cornelius Severus, the author of a poem on the death of Cicero, and on the war of Sicily<sup>1</sup> between Sext. Pompey and Augustus.

In this auspicious age, which terminated the rancour of civil war, and restored peace to Rome, with the enjoyments of society, the example of a few great poets was calculated to rouse emulation in all. One bard caught fire from the genius of another; and, as everything contributed to spread and to promote the flame, the national spirit of poetry became everywhere triumphant.

While devoting their talents to the cultivation of the same department of literature, so far were these numerous and illustrious poets from being in the smallest degree tainted with the jealousy which has so often

<sup>1</sup> The poem entitled *Ætna*, which is still extant, has been attributed by Jos. Scaliger and other critics, to Cornelius Severus, and is supposed to have formed part of his great work on the war of Sicily. This opinion was founded on one of the epistles of Seneca (ep. 79), where Severus is classed among other poets who have described Mount *Ætna*. But Wernsdorf has, at considerable length, attempted to prove that it was written by an author called Lucilius Junior, in the reign of Claudius and Nero, to whom Seneca addresses several of his epistles.

It is not certain when Manilius, the author of the *Astronomicon*, lived; but he, as well as Phædrus and Gratius Faliscus, will be best included in the subsequent reign of Tiberius.

infected men of learning and genius, and led them to regard the works of their contemporaries with a jaundiced eye, that they not only passed their lives in habits of the strictest friendship, but admired and enjoyed each other's literary productions with a sincerity which was at once a proof of the liberality of their minds, and the correctness of their judgment. This admiration they were not more ready to feel than to express; and their works, particularly those of Ovid, abound with passages devoted to the commemoration of their friendships, and to the mutual commendation of their talents and writings. The example of these poets extended to their contemporaries, and humanized and improved the temper of the age.

But though this was the general character of the period, and of all its bards who merited applause or distinction, there were some pretenders to the name of poet who were actuated by a very different spirit. No profession can be highly esteemed without producing numbers who would undeservedly arrogate its honours. The age of Virgil was that also of Bavius and Mævius—wretches whose productions would not have rescued them from total oblivion; but, not satisfied with writing bad verses, they became the detractors of those whose lines they could not emulate, and associated with other scribblers of a similar stamp, to bear down the merit which presented such a galling contrast to their own deficiencies. Hence the names of Bavius and Mævius will be known as long as that of Virgil himself survives. The table of Tigellius, which was one of the best in

Rome for cookery, though not for company, was thronged with buffoons, witlings, and poetasters, among whom Virgil, Horace, and Varius were depreciated and run down as paltry poets, while Bavius, Mævius, Crispinus, Fannius, Demetrius, and Tigellius himself, passed for the true sons of Apollo. Many of their number, having united a bad heart to a rhyming head, were branded as fools by the first poets of Rome.<sup>1</sup> Bavius, for an offence, more serious than writing bad verses, was banished to Cappadocia, where he died in the year 720.<sup>2</sup> Mævius, who was both disgusting in his person and corrupt in his morals, was likewise exiled. But the rest of the fraternity were doomed to a severer punishment. They remained in Italy to behold Virgil complete the Marble Fane, which he had announced in his *Georgics*, and Horace gradually uprear the “Monumentum ære perennius.”

Before concluding the subject of Roman poetry during the reign of Augustus, it may be proper to advert to the state of the Tragic and Comic Drama in that period which proved so auspicious for the cultivation of almost every description of poetry.

Schlegel<sup>3</sup> distinguishes two different epochs in the

<sup>1</sup> Men' moveat cimex Pantilius, aut crucier quòd  
Vellicet absentem Demetrius, aut quòd ineptus  
Fannius Hermogenis lædat conviva Tigelli.

Horat. *Satir.* Lib. I. 10.

Qui Bavium non odit—amet tua carmina, Mævi.

Virgil, *Eclog.* 3.

<sup>2</sup> Euseb. *Chron.*

<sup>3</sup> Lect. 8.



tragic literature of Rome—the first, that of Ennius and the dramatists by whom he was immediately succeeded ; the second, that of Augustus. The former, as we have already seen, was an age of almost literal translation from the Greek ; and pieces which had been borrowed from Athenian dramas, still kept possession of the stage as far down as the time of Cicero. After the death of Attius, scarcely a single tragedy, even of Greek origin was given to the public during the whole existence of the Commonwealth. But the writers of the age of Augustus, and even Augustus himself, were seized with the rage of dramatic composition ; and some critics have supposed that Horace's epistle on the *Art of Poetry*, addressed to the Pisos, was written expressly for the purpose of preserving a young friend from the influence of the general contagion. The dramatists of this period found it necessary to throw more originality into their plays than was required in the time of the Scipios, when Greek literature was so little known, that a translation from Euripides or Sophocles, possessed for the readers or audience all the zest and novelty which a newly contrived plot could have afforded.

The drama, however, did not keep pace in the Augustan age with that improvement which was manifested in every other department of literature. At Rome the drama had been throughout a popular entertainment. The plays of Plautus, and even of Terence, were written to be represented on the stage, and not to be read. Almost all dramatic excellencies bear reference to an early state of society, and are such

as a rude uncultivated mind is capable of relishing. Hence its improvement does not depend on the cultivation of taste, and cannot be expected always to accompany the progress of national intelligence and refinement. The Roman people, too, however fastidious might be their critical judgment in the Augustan age, would probably endure an inferior dramatic performance (especially a tragedy) more patiently than an indifferent work in any other province of literature. They were passionately fond of show and *spectacle* on the stage; and hence, changes of amusing scenes, magnificent dresses, altars, sacrifices, processions, public audiences of ambassadors, and such other mechanical ornaments as are easily introduced, would impose on the eyes of the multitude, would compensate for the want of nature or the finer touches of dramatic art, and throw, as it were, a glittering veil over all the faults and defects of composition.

The writers of Tragedy in the reign of Augustus were not numerous, and though literal translation from the Greek was now abjured by them, Greek subjects were still principally selected. One of the most distinguished tragic writers of this age, was Asinius Pollio, who was remarkable for the energy of his expressions, and imitated in his style the ancient dramatists, such as Attius and Pacuvius. Mæcenâs wrote a *Prometheus*, and Augustus an *Ajax*, which he himself destroyed:<sup>1</sup> but by far the most celebrated tragedies of the period, were the *Medea* of Ovid, and

<sup>1</sup> Macrobius, *Satur.* Lib. II. c. 4.

the *Thyestes* of Varius. The former has been highly extolled by the author of the dialogue *De Causis Corruptæ Eloquentiæ*,<sup>1</sup> and Quintilian declares, that the latter may be compared to any tragedy of the Greeks.

Though all the tragic productions of the Augustan school have perished, we may form some notion concerning them from the intimation of ancient writers, and what we know of the spirit of the Augustan age. Quintilian, in describing the characteristics of ancient and modern tragedy, ascribes to the former, “*gravitas sententiarum, verborum pondus, auctoritas personarum* ;” and to the other, “*nitor, eruditio, summa in excolendis operibus manus* ;” and when we find that the same author regards the *Medea* of Ovid as a first-rate drama of the new school, no one who is acquainted with the genius of that poet can doubt as to the nature of the class of productions to which his tragedy belonged. They would certainly be distinguished by that extreme degree of refinement, correctness of taste, and accomplishment of art, which belonged to the Augustan age ; but they would probably be divested of the high-minded Roman sentiments of fortitude, liberty, and patriotism, with which the more ancient tragedies were impressed, and would be totally devoid of that deep tragic interest which can only be inspired when the spirit and passions of a nation are addressed.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Nec ullus liber tam illustris est quàm *Medea* Ovidii.—c. 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Classical Journal*, No. 66.



Though Augustus was fond of the ancient Comedy, and though, by his orders, it frequently reappeared on the stage,<sup>1</sup> yet, during his whole reign, almost the only legitimate successor to Plautus and Terence was Caius Fundanius, (the brother-in-law of the learned Varro,) who was generally reputed to have possessed the happiest genius of all his contemporaries, for the old regular comedy, where the rapacious courtesan, the dissolute youth, the parasite, the covetous old man, and the intriguing slave, form the unvarying characters of the drama—

Argutâ meretrice potes, Davoque Chremeta  
Eludente senem, comis garrire libellos  
Unus vivorum, Fundani.<sup>2</sup>——

Roscius, the famed comic actor, was dead at the time when Cicero pronounced his oration for Archias; and Æsopus, having amassed an immense fortune, and having declined in his tragic powers, had long since retired from the stage. The loss of these great actors could not be supplied, and no doubt hastened the decline of the regular drama. It was about this period that the *Comœdia Trabeata*, if not first introduced, was first brought to perfection at Rome, by Caius Melissus.<sup>3</sup> This writer was born at Spoleto, of free parents; but having been exposed in his infancy, on account of their domestic dissensions, he was educated

<sup>1</sup> Sueton. *in August.* c. 89. "

<sup>2</sup> Horat. *Sat. Lib. I. Sat. 10.*

<sup>3</sup> Fecit novum genus togatarum, inscripsitque Trabeatas.

Sueton. *de Illust. Grammat.*

by a stranger who found him, and after he grew up presented him to Mæcnas as an accomplished grammarian. When in course of time Melissus was acknowledged and reclaimed by his mother, he refused to quit the situation he held in the family of Mæcnas. He became a great favourite of that minister, who gave him his freedom, appointed him one of his librarians, and introduced him to the notice of Augustus. The *Comœdia Trabeata*, which he invented, differed from the *Palliata*, because Roman, and not Greek characters were introduced in it, and from the *Comœdia Tabernaria* by the higher dignity of its persons. Ovid, in that last epistle from Pontus, in which he has commemorated so many of his illustrious contemporaries, has alluded to Melissus and his comic Muse—

Et tua cum socco Musa, Melisse, levis.<sup>1</sup>

On the whole, though but few regular plays were written during the Augustan age, a considerable taste for them, at least during its earlier times, still survived,<sup>2</sup> and the Roman people were neither incapable of observing the defects<sup>3</sup> nor relishing the beauties of the legitimate drama.<sup>4</sup> But before the close of this

<sup>1</sup> *De Ponto*, IV. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Hos ediscit, et hos arcto stipata theatro  
Spectat Roma potens. *Epist. Lib. II. 1.*

<sup>3</sup> Si dicentis erunt fortunis absona dicta,  
Romani tollunt equites peditesque cachinnum.

*Horat. Ars Poet.*

<sup>4</sup> Tu quid ego, et populus mecum desideret, audi.  
*Ibid.*

period, the fondness for a new species of scenic exhibition almost wholly engrossed every other interest, and superseded every other theatrical amusement.

In the commencement of the dramatic art at Rome, a few *histrions* were brought from Etruria, who, without poetical composition, or even words, and without any action adapted to a character, merely danced to the sound of a flute, according to the rude manner practised in their native country. The Athenians, along with the more dignified exhibitions of the stage, appear to have had dancers who applied gesticulations, to the rhythm of poetry, or the notes of music.<sup>1</sup>

From Etruria and Greece the Romans derived many of their arts. Their pantomime, however, at least in its improved state, came to them from Asia and Africa. The coast of Asia Minor was the region of gaiety and revels. The inhabitants of the great towns which were situated along its luxurious shores, were much addicted to public diversions, and to all sorts of mirth and mummery. In their assemblies held to celebrate festivals to the gods—in their nocturnal orgies, amid groves or in temples, performers of every description, musicians, jugglers, and mimics, contributed to the entertainments. At one time these revellers were incorporated into a sort of body, and assembled in vast multitudes at an annual festival to the honour of Bacchus, which was successively held in four different

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle, *Poet.* Part. I.



towns of Ionia. They enjoyed golden days under the administration of Antony in the East : They spread themselves all over Ionia ; and from the intimate relation subsisting at that period between the eastern and western parts of the empire, some of their number found their way to Rome. The Egyptians, also, had wonderful talents for assuming characters. Cleopatra herself could enact any part even as low as the wife of a tradesman or sailor. Many Romans in the service of Antony became familiar with such exhibitions at the Court of Alexandria, and sustained parts in these representations. The great Munatius Plancus, a consul, a commander of armies, and governor of provinces, was not ashamed, while the sycophant of Cleopatra, to appear at the Egyptian court among stage-players and buffoons, whose birth was as mean as their profession. | At a public entertainment in order to ingratiate himself with the queen, he undertook to personate the sea-god Glaucus ; and having painted his body green, he danced naked on the stage, with a crown of reeds on his head, and dragging the tail of a huge fish behind him.<sup>1</sup>

Almost all the Romans who had served under Antony in Asia and Africa returned to Rome, after his defeat at Actium, well prepared, by the life they had for some years led, and by the pastimes they had

<sup>1</sup> Velleius Paterculus, Lib. II. c. 83.—*Cæruleatus et nudus, caputque redimitus arundine, et caudam trahens, genibus innixus, Glaucum saltasset.*

witnessed, to enjoy those theatrical amusements, which, though foreign from the native dignity and severity of the Roman character, were well adapted to the voluptuous manners which now began to prevail in the capital.

The inhabitants of Cilicia were among the most sprightly in Asia, and the district was a chief resort and rendezvous of that strolling society of players, musicians, and jugglers, who had incorporated themselves into an Order, or community, devoted to the service of Bacchus. Pylades, the celebrated Roman pantomime, was a native of this country, and was nurtured amid the mummeries of this scenical train. He was brought to Rome in the flower of youth, and first gave grace and dignity to the pantomimic stage, on which only unmeaning attitudes and rude gesticulations had been hitherto exhibited. The recitation, however, of the regular tragedy had always been accompanied with vehement and significant gestures. In consequence of one person thus gesticulating while the other declaimed, the Roman people had probably become expert in the interpretation of mimetic action ; and, before the time of Pylades, certain signs, both natural and conventional, would be recognised as the tokens of corresponding emotions. It was principally tragic and majestic parts that Pylades represented, such as *Œdipus* and *Hercules Furens* ; and his dancing chiefly expressed the grandeur of heroic sentiments.

The characteristics of his rival *Bathyllus*, who was

celebrated as a comic pantomime, were grace and gaiety. Bathyllus, a native of Alexandria, was the freedman of Mæcenas, and a great favourite of that minister, who supported him while on the stage against all his enemies and rivals.<sup>1</sup> He chiefly excelled in the representation of fanciful and frolicsome characters, whether male or female, as Pan, Echo, Leda, Sylvanus.<sup>2</sup> Sometimes he also appeared in tragic parts; but in these he was always inferior to Pylades.<sup>3</sup> Both these renowned actors, disdaining the buffoonery of their predecessors, and the applauses of the rabble, strove only to express elegant or noble ideas by elegant or noble attitudes. It has been disputed whether the dancing and gesticulations of the pantomime were accompanied by singing. It would appear that some sort of song was previously written out, to which the actor of pantomimes adapted his gestures; he did not exert his own voice in singing, but his steps and attitudes were accompanied by musical instruments, and perhaps by song from the orchestra,<sup>4</sup> somewhat in the manner of the pantomimic ex-

<sup>1</sup> Indulserat ei ludicro Augustus, dum Mæcenati obtemperat effuso in amorem Bathylli.—Tacit. *Annal.* Lib. I. c. 54.

<sup>2</sup> Hoffmanni *Lexicon.* Art. *Pantomimus.*

Tres tantum ad numeros Satyri moveare Bathylli.

Pers. *Sat.* V.

Chironomon Ledam molli saltante Bathyllo.

Juvenal, *Sat.* VI.

<sup>3</sup> Vossius, *Inst. Poet.* Lib. II. c. 37.

<sup>4</sup> Princeps Tibicen notior paullo fuit,

Operam Bathyllo solitus in scenâ dare.

Phædrus, Lib. V. Fab. 7.



hibitions of the present day. The entertainment occasionally resembled a regular drama, in the introduction of a number of different actors, who, in a continuation of scenes, went through a regular plot or story, contrived by themselves, or taken from some celebrated poem. In other pieces only one actor appeared, who either represented a single character, or a variety of characters successively in his own person, by changing his dress and assuming a different mask, always suited to the new part which he adopted.<sup>1</sup> The mask of the pantomime being appropriate to the subject was generally beautiful; for, as the dancer neither spoke nor sung, it did not require the gaping mouth of the tragic or comic mask; and as the subject was usually elegant, and not grotesque, it had not the grin of the vizard which was employed in the Mimes or Atellane Farces. The great art of the pantomimic actor consisted in communicating at once to the spectators, by the proper choice of a mask, and by significant impressive gesture, the full import and meaning of all he intended to convey.

There is nothing gives us so complete an idea of the nature of this species of performance, as a story

<sup>1</sup> ————— Solusque per omnes

Ibit personas, et turbam reddet in uno :

Aut magnos heroas aget, scenisque togatas.

Omnis fortunæ vultum per membra reducet ;

Æquabitque choros gestu, cogetque videre

Præsentem Trojam, Priamumque ante ora cadentem ;

Quodque agit, id credes stupefactus imagine veri.

Manilius, *Astronom.* Lib. V.

related by Macrobius in his *Saturnalia*, which at once affords us a notion of the deep conception of character among pantomimic actors, and their inventive powers in denoting it. Hylas, who had at one time been a scholar of Pylades, and subsequently became his rival, danced a song or hymn which closed with the words, "The great Agamemnon." To express the idea of greatness, he drew himself up, and stood erect, as if wishing to extend his size. Pylades, who happened to be present among the spectators, exclaimed from the pit,—“You make him tall, not great.” The spectators then obliged Pylades to go upon the stage and dance over the same song; when he came to the words, he showed his superior art by throwing himself into a posture of profound meditation, expressive of the weighty cares of a monarch who presided in council, and directed in war. On another occasion, Hylas danced the part of the blind Œdipus, when Pylades called out to him as a reproach, “*You see.*”<sup>1</sup>

Such was the popularity of the pantomimic art at Rome during the reign of Augustus, that the multitude contended for the superior excellence of rival actors with as much warmth and eagerness as they had formerly shown in espousing the cause of Marius or Sylla, in the days of the republic. As was to be expected, they grew so proud and insolent, in consequence of the extravagant favour they enjoyed, that their behaviour required the special interposition of the empe-

<sup>1</sup> Macrobi. *Satur.* Lib. II. c. 7.

ror. On the complaint of the prætor, he ordered Hylas to be publicly scourged in the court of his own house.<sup>1</sup> Pylades, being one day hissed by a spectator belonging to the faction which was opposed to him, pointed him out with his finger, in order that those of his own party might know on whom to avenge themselves. He was immediately banished by the emperor from the city and from Italy, partly on account of this misdemeanour,<sup>2</sup> and partly to gratify Mæcenæ, who supported Bathyllus. He was soon, however, recalled, and being summoned into the presence of Augustus, that prince counselled him to behave with more discretion in future, and not to disturb the peace of the city by forming new parties and factions. "Cæsar," replied the artful and unabashed Cilician, "it is of service to you that the people should be occupied with disputes concerning me and Bathyllus."<sup>3</sup>

Pylades and Bathyllus excelled so highly in the pantomimic art, and so fascinated the minds of the Romans, that from their time the taste for this species of representation which they had introduced became a sort of phrensy. Men and women were divided into factions like the favourers of the contending charioteers of Alexandria. The predilection for a pantomimic actor, or the prejudice against him, became one of the principal affairs in society; and so strongly were the passions excited on this topic, that the pub-

<sup>1</sup> Sueton. *in August.* c. 45.

<sup>2</sup> Sueton. *in August.* c. 45.

<sup>3</sup> Dio Cassius, Lib. LIV.



lie places of resort and amusement often became scenes of violence and bloodshed. To maintain the tranquillity of the town, and correct its flagitious morals, an edict was passed by the emperor Tiberius, prohibiting all senators from entering the dwellings of the actors of pantomimes, and forbidding the Roman knights to surround them in crowds, as had been their custom, on the public streets.<sup>1</sup> Before the end of his reign, however, Tiberius banished them altogether from Rome. Under his successors they were alternately recalled and expelled: the rage for pantomimic entertainments procuring their return, and the disorders they almost immediately created occasioning their expulsion. But at length, Trajan, who once had favoured them, perceiving that the pantomimic actors would never cease to raise disturbances among the citizens, finally drove them off the stage.

The interest which the pantomimes excited among all classes of the Roman people towards the close of the life of Augustus, and under the reigns of his immediate successors, was probably greater than that emperor wished, and was attended with more serious consequences than he had foreseen. But his protection of theatrical entertainments, and his patronage of actors, formed part of his system of policy. Mæcenas, among other arts of government, and among plans of a more important nature for conducting the

<sup>1</sup> Ne domos pantomimorum senator introiret: ne egredientes in publicum equites Romani cingerent; aut alibi quàm in theatro spectarentur.—Tacit. *Annal.* Lib. I. c. 77.

administration of the empire, had recommended to his master to amuse the people, and occupy their thoughts by constant exhibitions of plays and public spectacles.<sup>1</sup> In pursuance of this advice, he constructed, at his own charge, the theatre of Marcellus in honour of his nephew; and that of Balbus was built by his desire. Augustus, too, was fond (or at least appeared to be so) of all sorts of theatrical entertainments.<sup>2</sup> He was anxious to show this species of sympathy with the feelings and amusements of his subjects, and would often spend hours together, and sometimes even whole days, at dramatic representations, as intent on what was enacting as the idlest loungeur in the state: and when indisposition or public affairs prevented his personal appearance, he generally sent one of the imperial family to represent him, and offer his apology to the people. Julius Cæsar had lost much of his popularity by reading despatches, making notes, and answering applications, while he was present at these exhibitions;<sup>3</sup> and, in fact, nothing can be more affronting than this tacit declaration of conscious superiority, and of indifference to that by which others are delighted. Augustus thought it more popular, and he had more leisure than Julius, to behave like the rest of the spectators; nor did he disown that he was interested in these performances. By them

<sup>1</sup> Dio Cassius.

<sup>2</sup> *Indulserat ei ludicro Augustus; neque ipse abhorrebat talibus studiis, et civile rebatur misceri voluptatibus vulgi.*

Tacit. *Annal.* Lib. I. c. 54.

<sup>3</sup> Sueton. *in August.* c. 45.

the curiosity of a restless multitude was fed, and their attention was so engrossed, that they totally forgot those affairs of state in which they had once so great a share. Those fiery passions found vent at the theatre which had formerly been exhaled in the forum. Jugglers and dancers occupied the minds which in better days would have thought only of honours and triumphs, and the rewards of laborious virtue; and, perhaps, were not without their influence in enervating and subduing the spirit of a fierce and martial people.

Such (at least, so far as I am capable of delineating it) was the Roman poetry of the Augustan age—a poetry nurtured amid the storms of factious liberty, but matured in the tranquillity of a court. No class of works produced at the same period, ever so strongly won the admiration of mankind. Greece itself never exhibited at one moment a brighter constellation of poets. The glories of the age of Pericles (so superior in the triumphs of art) did not outshine the blaze of poetic genius which illumined the court of Augustus. The poetry of republican Rome having been closely formed on Greek models, it was difficult to distinguish its spirit by any general characteristics. Both the tone of language and sentiment varied according to those of the original author, which always predominated over national feelings and manners. But in the less servile poetry of the Augustan age, we may perceive through the imitations by which it is still marked, that air of nationality which was acquired from the greatness and unity of the Roman



empire, and could not be expected in literary works, produced where there was a subdivision of states in the same country, as in Greece, modern Italy, Germany, and Britain : and we may also recognise that love of rural retirement which originated in the mode of life of the ancient Italians, but was augmented by the pleasing contrast which the undisturbed repose and simple enjoyments of rural existence presented to the bustle of an immense and agitated capital.

The productions of the Augustan age may have been in some measure derived from Greece, but in turn they have been to all future times the chief models of heroic, didactic, elegiac, and pastoral composition. If the Greeks gave the first impulse to poetic genius, the Romans engraved the traces of its progress deeper on the world. For when Europe first awakened from its long trance of barbarism and ignorance, the works of Roman genius were alone accessible to imitation. Dante, who searched the volumes of Virgil with such long study, and such ardent affection, had no key to the treasures of Greek poetry. Petrarch, while familiar with the Latin tongue, was struggling to acquire the language of the Greeks, and heard its accents only from the barbarous lips of Leontius Pilatus. Hence it is on the classical models of the Augustan age that the most beautiful portions of modern poetry have been formed,—and there is scarcely a poetical work of eminence in which we may not discover traces more or less profound of their sentiments, their characters, their imagery, and their diction.

We have formerly seen, that during the early progress of poetry at Rome, prose composition had continued in a state of neglect and barbarism. Cato the Censor, the most ancient prose writer among the Romans, was a man of inflexible character and sound judgment, but of little feeling or imagination. His agricultural works are not only simple but rude—they exhibit no art of arrangement, nor felicity of illustration, nor amenity of style.

The treatise of Cato, *De Re Rusticâ*, was followed by the dry and jejune annals of Calpurnius Piso, Valerius Antias, and similar writers, whose style became proverbial for dulness and sterility.

It was the continued exercise of oratory in great and magnificent causes, which first gave vigour and richness to Latin prose, and shortly brought it to perfection. Those whose duty it was to lead by their voice the opinions of others, required to employ the persuasions of art, and some of the flowers of speech. They themselves naturally wrote as they harangued; and those who had listened to their animated orations could no longer endure the dry and sterile compositions to which they had been previously accustomed. Prose composition, accordingly, attained its highest perfection in the time of the republic: and if the verses of Virgil and Horace be more refined, and smooth, and pure, than those of Lucretius or Catullus, no prose writer of the Augustan age was able to surpass the style of Cicero and Cæsar.

Indeed, it is perhaps to be regretted that style be-

came at this period a matter of such paramount consideration, since the philosophers of Rome were thus more studious of eloquence than precision ; and her historians, while endeavouring, without due discrimination, to dress up the ancient chronicles, and to infuse some spirit into the dry records of the meager annals, have ever been more intent on effect, and on elegance of composition, which they considered as the principal merit of history, than on accurate details of facts. Such in particular was the chief object of

## LIVY,

who seems to have valued history more as a rhetorical composition, than as a register of events. This writer though unquestionably the greatest historian of Rome, has been but slightly mentioned, either by those authors of his own country who were contemporary with him, or by those who succeeded him ; and we, in consequence, have little information concerning the circumstances of his life. He was born at Padua, of a consular family, in the year of Rome 695. The place of his birth was one of the most ancient and distinguished municipal states of the Roman empire. Titus Livius Optatus was the first of the Livian family who came to it from Rome ; and from him was descended Caius Livius, the father of the historian.<sup>1</sup> We have seen that many of the poets and literary men of Rome had been brought in early youth to the

<sup>1</sup> Zabarella, *Storia della gente Livia Romana e Padovana*.



capital. Livy, however, seems to have received his early instructions in his native city. But though his education was provincial, he was taught all the useful learning of his age; and it has been conjectured, from several passages of his history, and the general colour of his style, that he had acquired some superfluous accomplishments in a school of declamation.<sup>1</sup> It would appear, that he had remained at Padua during the whole period of the civil dissensions, proscriptions, and violations of property, which followed the assassination of Cæsar. It has even been maintained by some writers, that he had commenced his great work at Padua ere he visited the capital.<sup>2</sup> But through the whole of the first *Decade*, which is the part they suppose he had written before coming to Rome, he speaks concerning the localities of the city, its customs, judicial forms, and religious ceremonies, as one who was actually on the spot, and had ocular proof of all he relates. At whatever time he came to Rome, it is evident that he commenced his history between the year 725 and 730; for in the first book<sup>3</sup> he mentions, that at the period when he wrote, the Temple of Janus had been twice shut since the reign of Numa—once after the first Punic War, and again in his own time by Augustus. Now, this temple never had been closed by Augustus till 725, so that the passage could not have been written prior to that year; and it could not have been written subsequently

<sup>1</sup> Monboddo, *Origin and Progress of Language*, Vol. V. Book I. c. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Chr. Kruse, *De Fide Livii*, (Lips. 1811.)      <sup>3</sup> Lib. I. c. 19.

to 730; because, in that season, Augustus again shut the temple, and Livy, of course, must have then said that it had been three times and not twice closed since the age of Numa. Soon after his arrival at Rome, he had composed some dialogues on philosophical and political questions,<sup>1</sup> which he addressed to Augustus. These dialogues, which are now lost, procured for him the favour of the emperor, who gave him free access to all those archives and records of the state which might prove serviceable in the prosecution of the historical researches in which he was employed. He also allotted him apartments in his own palace,<sup>2</sup> and sometimes even condescended to afford explanations, that facilitated the right understanding of documents which were important to his investigations. Being thus placed in the centre of the court of Augustus, he enjoyed the best opportunities of learning from statesmen the springs of political events, and from commanders the stratagems of warfare. The city itself supplied him with those lofty ideas which are everywhere displayed in his history; while his intercourse with all that was refined or elegant in the civilized world, communicated to his style that taste, and purity, and nobleness of expression, which formed the characteristics of the age. But, above all, his situation was the most favourable that could be chosen for inspecting such monuments, and amassing such memorials, as were necessary for the composition of a Roman history.

<sup>1</sup> Seneca, *Epist.* 100.

<sup>2</sup> Muller, *Einleitung*.

It appears that Livy availed himself of the good graces of the emperor, only for the purpose of facilitating the historical researches in which he was engaged. We do not hear that he accepted any pecuniary favours, or even held any public employment. It has been conjectured by some writers, from a passage in Suetonius, that he had for a short while superintended the education of Claudius,<sup>1</sup> who afterwards succeeded to the empire. But though the expressions scarcely authorize this inference, they prove, that at Livy's suggestion, Claudius undertook in his youth to write a history of Rome from the death of Julius Cæsar,<sup>2</sup> and thus acquired the habit of historical composition, which he continued after his accession; being better qualified, as Gibbon remarks, to record great actions than to perform them.

Livy continued for nearly twenty years to be closely occupied in the composition of his history. During this long period his chief residence was at Rome, or in its immediate vicinity; but he occasionally retired to Naples,<sup>3</sup> that he might there arrange with leisure and tranquillity the materials he had amassed in the capital. He also paid frequent visits to his native town, where he was invariably received with distinguished honours.

<sup>1</sup> Gibbon's *Miscellaneous Works*, Vol. IV. p. 425.

<sup>2</sup> Historiam in adolescentiâ, hortante T. Livio, Sulpicio vero Flavo etiam adjuvante, scribere adgressus est. Initium autem sumisit historiæ post cædem Cæsaris Dictatoris.—*In Claudio*, c. 41.

<sup>3</sup> Funccius, *De Virili Ætate Ling. Lat.* Pars II. c. 4.



Though Livy's great work was not finished till the year 745, or 746, he had previously published parts of it, from time to time, by which means he early acquired a high reputation with his countrymen, who considered him as holding the same rank in the class of their historians, which Virgil occupied among their poets, and Cicero among their orators. His fame reached even the remotest extremities of the Roman empire. An inhabitant of Cadiz was so struck with his illustrious character, that he travelled all the way from that city to Rome, on purpose to see him, and, having gratified his curiosity, straightway returned to Spain.<sup>1</sup>

Although his history was completed, as we have seen, in 745, Livy continued to reside at Rome till the death of Augustus, which happened in 765. On the accession of Tiberius, he returned to Padua, where he survived five years longer, and at length died at the place of his birth, in 770, and in the 76th year of his age.

Livy is supposed to have been twice married. By one of his wives he left several daughters and a son, to whom he addressed an epistle or short treatise on the subject of Rhetoric, in which, while delivering his opinion concerning the authors most proper to be read by youth, he says, that they ought first to study Demosthenes and Cicero, and next, such writers as most closely resembled these excellent orators.<sup>2</sup>

After his death, statues were erected to Livy at

<sup>1</sup> Pliny, *Epist.* Lib. II. ep. 3.    <sup>2</sup> Quintil. *Inst. Orat.* Lib. X. c. 1.

Rome; for we learn from Suetonius, that the mad Caligula had nearly ordered that all his images, as well as those of Virgil, should be removed from the public libraries. His more rational subjects, nevertheless, regarded Livy as the only historian that had yet appeared, whose dignity of sentiment, and majesty of expression, rendered him worthy to record the story of the Roman Republic.

The work of Livy comprehended the whole history of Rome, from its foundation to the death of Drusus, the brother of Tiberius, which happened in the year 744. It consisted of 140, or, according to some, of 142 books; but of these, as is well known, only thirty-five are now extant. The first ten books, which are still remaining, and which have been termed the first *Decade*, bring down the history from the arrival of Æneas in Italy, to a period which was within a few years of the commencement of the war with Pyrrhus. A *hiatus* of the following ten books, or second *Decade*, deprives us of the interesting expedition of Pyrrhus, who landed in Italy in order to succour the Tarentines—the discomfiture at length sustained by that enterprising monarch—the final subjugation of *Magna Græcia*, and the first Punic War. The narrative recommences, at the twenty-first book, with the second Carthaginian contest, in which Hannibal invaded Italy, and it continues with little interruption till the period when the Romans resolved on the destruction of Carthage, and began the third war, which they waged against that ill-fated city; thus comprehending in one unbroken relation, the complete

history of the great struggle in which Hannibal and Scipio were the chief antagonists—the campaigns in Macedon against Philip—those against his successor Perseus, and the contest with Antiochus, king of Syria. Still, however, it must be admitted, that the most valuable portion of Livy's history has perished. The commencement of those dissensions, which ended in the subversion of the liberties of Rome, and the motives by which the actors on the great political stage were influenced, would have given scope for more interesting reflection, and more philosophic deduction, than details of the wars with the Sabines and Samnites, or even of those with the Carthaginians and Greeks. Stronger reliance might also have been placed on this portion of the history, than on that by which it was preceded. The author's account of the civil wars of Marius and Sylla, of Pompey and Cæsar, may have been derived from those who were eye witnesses of these destructive contests, and he himself was living an impartial and intelligent observer of all the subsequent events, which his history recorded. Both Lord Bolingbroke and Gibbon, have declared, that they would willingly give up what we now possess of Livy, on the terms of recovering what we have lost.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “ Il me semble avoir lu quelque part dans les ouvrages de Milord Bolingbroke, que ce grand homme faisoit bien plus de cas des livres de Tite Live qui sont perdu que de ceux qui nous restent encore, et que (sans faire attention à la quantité de l'un ou de l'autre) il auroit volontiers donné ce que nous avons pour recouvrer ce que nous n'avons plus. Je trouve que Milord Bolingbroke avoit assez raison de le dire.” Gibbon's *Miscellaneous Works*, Vol. IV. p. 427.



Cicero requires as essential conditions in the *matter* of history—That it should consist of things great in themselves, and worthy of public memory and fame. It will at once be admitted, that a nobler topic could not have been selected than that which Livy has chosen. A more splendid design, indeed, never was formed in the mind of any historian. The subject was not merely great, from the long succession of years which it comprehended, but from the *grâce* of the sovereign people, whose fortunes it records—a people, who, from a troop of vagabond shepherds, and outlaws, accidentally assembled, in a barbarous age, on the banks of Tiber, became in progress of time, by their valour, frugality, discipline, and perseverance, the masters of the civilized world—among whom more than any other nation, characters appeared to attract astonishment and delight—and who reached the eminence they at length attained through the most surprising vicissitudes of fortune, and interesting variety of events—sometimes crushed down almost to annihilation, but rising from the pressure, like the palm, more vigorous and triumphant.

The choice of an important and interesting subject, is the chief task and duty of the historian. In estimating his character and merits in the mode of treating it, regard must first be had to the truth and credibility of his facts, under which head we are led to consider—the extent and minuteness of his investigation—the degree of judgment he exercises in discriminating what is true from what is false—and his candour and impartiality in placing events, as well as

characters, in their true light, so that they be neither clouded by detraction nor blazoned by panegyric.

We know so little concerning the life and character of Livy, that we must judge of his credibility from the history itself. It is evident, indeed, that he had sufficient courage and freedom of spirit, to write the whole truth, and nothing but the truth : but, unfortunately, he wrote not chiefly for the investigation of truth, but to present his fellow citizens with an agreeable narrative, and to contribute at once to his own fame, and the glory of his country.<sup>1</sup>

In a preceding volume, I hazarded some general observations on the subject of the authenticity of early Roman history ; and that question is closely connected with the discussion that has been lately raised, concerning the materials employed by Livy in the composition of his first decade. For it is evident, that the faith to be given to his relation of events, in that part at least of his history, must depend on the credibility of the ancient authorities, which he consulted and followed. In the first five books, Livy seldom refers to testimonies ; but it may be justly suspected, that much of his narrative is founded merely on tradition and belief. From its correspondence with what Cicero relates, in his second book, *De Republica*, concerning the early history and constitution of Rome, it is evident that he records what was generally believed at the time, among the best informed

<sup>1</sup> Liv. *Præf.*

<sup>2</sup> Lachman, *De Fontibus Hist. Livii*. Gotting. 1822. 4to.

writers, the statesmen, and philosophers of Rome. In the five books which follow, he alludes to his authorities only incidentally, being apparently little solicitous about the credit that might be given to his narrative, and unwilling by such reference, to interrupt the thread of his discourse, or in any degree impair its beauty.

It seems extremely doubtful, if, in the composition of the first decade, Livy had recourse to any of the ancient monuments of his country, such as the inscriptions on statues, tablets, and pillars, which we know had been set up at Rome, from the earliest periods. In the first place, few of those monuments, which could have thrown light on that portion of the history, which extends from the building of the city to its capture by the Gauls, and is contained in the first five books, existed in the time of Livy. They had mostly perished in the conflagration consequent on the taking of the city by the Gauls; and other memorials of this description had been subsequently destroyed during the horrors of the Civil and the Social Wars. A few of the most ancient treaties, indeed, and the *Tabulæ Triumphales*, were yet extant: Livy, however, does not seem to have much availed himself even of those monuments which still remained in the reign of Augustus. That emperor had afforded him the utmost facilities for prosecuting his historical labours; but it has been doubted, whether he enjoyed the advantages of this imperial favour while writing the first decade, or if he subsequently procured it by the fame of that elegant composition. And, whatever may have been his op-



portunities, he appears to have been too indolent to make profound researches concerning the mouldering monuments of his country. He was not completely master of the ancient Latin language, and, though a reverer of antiquity, by no means a diligent antiquary. He accordingly contented himself with resting on the authority of the old annalists, who wrote at a period when a greater number of memorials remained, or when, at all events, those which were extant had not become unintelligible. But Livy appears to have reposed on the faith of the annals, even in matters where he might have appealed to the original documents. He scarcely seems to have examined the *Leges Regiæ*, or the laws of the twelve tables; all that he says concerning their import being obviously taken from the annals; and when these guides fail him, he falls into mistakes, both with regard to the object and spirit of the enactments. The *Libri Lintei*, to which he most frequently refers, and which were preserved in the Temple of Juno Moneta, are cited by him only as to those facts for which they had been previously quoted by the annalists, Licinius Macer and Tubero.<sup>1</sup> The *Consular and Prætorian Commentaries*, and other works of a similar description, (with exception of the *Fasti Magistratum*,) are also quoted at second hand from the annals. Even the treaty with the Ardeates is cited merely on the authority of Macer.<sup>2</sup> The treaty, which was concluded with the Carthaginians, the year after the expulsion of

<sup>1</sup> Lib. IV. c. 7. 23.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

the Kings, seems to have been long unknown to Livy, though it is preserved entire by Polybius, and is of much importance in contradicting the commonly received opinions concerning several points in the history of that period.

Almost every state in Italy had its own chronicles, and by a careful comparison of these with the annals of Rome, much might have been done by an industrious historian in discovering the true events of those early wars in which the Romans were engaged with the neighbouring districts. Thucydides, by comparing the Spartan with the Athenian Memoirs, bestowed additional value and credibility on all his details concerning the Peloponnesian war. But Livy seems never to have examined either the written or traditional accounts of any of the Italian states except those of his native city, Padua. The assistance which these Paduan chronicles afforded him in correcting the account which was commonly received concerning the passage of the Gauls into Italy in the time of Tarquinius Priscus, and several other points of history, shows the advantages Livy might have derived from more extensive researches after such materials.

But what is more inexcusable, Livy seems in a great measure to have overlooked a numerous class of writers among his own countrymen, who, though not strictly historians, had thrown great light on the antiquities of Italy. At the head of this set of authors stands Cato the Censor, whose *Origines* supplied much sound and valuable instruction, with regard to the language, laws, and general antiquities of

the Roman people. Livy seems to have known nothing of Sulpicius Galba, or Scribonius Libo, who were writers of the same description as Cato, though probably of inferior authority. The work of Varro, the most learned of the Romans, *De Rerum Humanarum et Divinarum Antiquitatibus*, would, if carefully studied, have afforded him ample and accurate information with regard to the ancient ministers of religion—the Pontiffs, Augurs, and Sibyls, and all that concerned the celebration of sacred rites and public sacrifices.

Whether the great work of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, was completed and given to the public before Livy wrote the first decade of his history, has been much disputed. Hooke is of opinion that Livy's history had been read by the Halicarnassian, and that it is often tacitly criticised by him, though the name of the author is not mentioned. Niebuhr, on the other hand, thinks that Livy was acquainted with the work of Dionysius, but that he despised his fabulous antiquities. Livy, indeed, seldom appears to follow the Greek author, and varies from him in so many important circumstances, that the discrepancy has been frequently adduced as an argument for the total uncertainty of the early periods of Roman history. "When we confront Dionysius with Livy," says a French writer, speaking of the period after the expulsion of the Kings, "we can hardly discover that it is the same history they relate."<sup>1</sup> Dionysius, it must be

<sup>1</sup> *Incertitude de l'Hist. Rom.* c. 6.



admitted, was a more industrious compiler than Livy. But his fault lay in his constant endeavours to establish a system, to which he made his facts subservient.

On the whole, then, it appears, that Livy must have nearly confined himself to the study of those ancient annalists who have been mentioned in a preceding volume, and of whom the earliest was Quintus Fabius Pictor. The credit to which the annals of Fabius are entitled cannot be very highly estimated. It appears, from the fragments of his works which remain, that he related at great length all the imaginary circumstances with regard to the arrival of Æneas in Italy, and the events which were supposed to have occurred at Rome immediately after the building of the city. Livy, accordingly, has judiciously rejected much of the earliest part of his narrative as uncertain, or altogether fabulous. Nevertheless, he has still valued him too highly, and placed too much confidence in some of his subsequent relations : and he frequently bestows on him more commendation than he was entitled to either from his fidelity or accuracy.<sup>1</sup> The other annalists whom Livy chiefly consulted were Calpurnius Piso, Licinius Macer, and Valerius Antias.

Though Livy unfortunately confined his studies in a great measure to these annalists, he must at least be allowed the merit of having perused them with much attention, of having carefully weighed the credit due to each, and compared them diligently on the various points of history on which they differed. He generally prefers the authority of those writers who

<sup>1</sup> Lachmann, *De Fontibus Hist. Livii*, p. 28.

lived nearest to the time when the events which they recorded happened; he considers a matter doubtful, though he finds it mentioned by several recent authors, if omitted by those of higher antiquity; he is much perplexed when annalists of equal antiquity differ in their relations, and the concurring testimony of many writers has always its due weight with him. The authority of Calpurnius Piso, though an ancient chronicler, is, in one instance, rejected by him, because he is single in stating as a fact what all succeeding annalists contradict. When Macer and Tuberо are at variance with their predecessor Piso, he leaves the matter uncertain.<sup>1</sup>

As formerly mentioned, the second decade of Livy is lost, and the narrative again opens with the commencement of the second Carthaginian war. In entering on this portion of his history, Livy was no longer compelled to collect the doubtful testimony of annalists, hesitating at every step to whom he should give the preference when they differed in their narrations. Long previous to his time, Polybius, the friend of the younger Scipio, and the most judicious author of antiquity, had written a history in forty-one books, which, after two introductory chapters, commenced regularly with the second Punic war, and ended with the reduction of Macedonia to the form of a Roman province. Polybius had been trained to the art of war by holding a command under Philopœmen, in the army of the Achaian league. After the defeat of the last monarch of Macedonia, he was sent as an

<sup>1</sup> Lachmann, *De Fontibus*, &c. p. 49.

hostage to Rome, where he became the friend and counsellor of the younger Scipio Africanus. He attended him in almost all his military expeditions, and was present at the destruction both of Carthage and Numantia. To collect materials for his work, and accurately fix the geography of places mentioned in it, he explored the remotest quarters of the Roman empire; and, by the favour of his illustrious patron, he obtained access, though a foreigner, to the most important historic documents of the state. It is true, we now possess only the first five books of his admirable work; but Livy had the whole, and we cannot too highly estimate the value of such a guide in the chain of circumstances during the important period which the Greek history comprehended.<sup>1</sup> For the events of the second Carthaginian war, Livy unfortunately still continued to follow Fabius.<sup>2</sup> But it may be presumed, that he availed himself of Polybius' history as an almost unerring authority for the incidents which occurred between the second and third Punic war. The principal contests carried on during this interval by the Romans were with the Greeks; and concerning all the circumstances of these campaigns, Polybius had the best opportunities of being accurately informed.

<sup>1</sup> Livy, however, is suspected of having, in some passages, totally misapprehended the meaning of the Greek author.—See Crevier, *Præfat. ad Edit. Livii*.—Monboddo, *Origin and Progress of Language*, Vol. V. Book I. c. 1 and 4.

<sup>2</sup> Fabium æqualem temporibus hujusce belli potissimum auctorem habui,—Lib. XXII. c. 7.



The history of Livy, from the conquest of Macedonia to his own time, has disappeared; but in the laws, decrees of the senate and people, harangues of orators, and despatches of generals, he possessed abundance of authentic documents for the history of the whole of this period; and, for the concluding years of it, he had the best means of deriving information from the chief actors in those important events which he recorded.

Such were the materials which Livy principally employed. Whether he has produced from them a faithful and accurate history has been much disputed. Those who have contested his claims to credibility, accuse him, 1st, of the commission of numerous errors; 2d, of partiality; 3d, of credulity.

It would open a field of discussion much too extensive to enter into any investigation concerning even a few of the most important mistakes which have been imputed to Livy. Inexperienced in military affairs, numerous blunders have been attributed to him with regard to encampments, circumvallations, sieges, and in general all warlike operations.<sup>1</sup> He did not, like Polybius, Sallust, or Diodorus Siculus, take the pains to visit the regions which had been the theatre of the great events he commemorates. Hence, many mistakes in geography, and much confusion with regard to the situation of towns, and the boundaries of districts.<sup>2</sup> “ Considered in this

<sup>1</sup> Casaubon, *Præfat. ad Polyb.*—Folard, *Comment.*—Niebuhr, *Römische Geschichte*, II. p. 499, 514.

<sup>2</sup> Lachmann, *De Fontibus Histor. Livii*, p. 106.

view," says Gibbon, "Livy appears merely as a man of letters, covered with the dust of his library, little acquainted with the art of war, and careless in point of geography."<sup>1</sup> Livy, besides, was not a very learned or zealous antiquary; and hence he has fallen into many errors of chronology, as also into mistakes concerning the ancient manners and institutions of the Romans.<sup>2</sup> Into various inadvertencies and contradictions he has been betrayed by carelessness or haste. Thus, having discovered an inscription on a breast-plate, which was at variance, as to a particular fact, with the common narrative of the annalists, he states it to be decisive against them; yet, subsequently, hurried away by the crowd of historians whom he followed, he forgets both himself and the confidence due to the breast-plate, and subscribes to the accuracy of the annalists whose narrative it falsified. Sometimes, when there are two relations, by two different authors, varying from each other, he follows the one in one part of his history, and yet assents to the other in a subsequent passage. Sometimes the same incidents are twice related, as having occurred in different years—a confusion into which he was led by the vast number of annalists whom he consulted, and the discrepancy in Roman chronology, some writers following Cato, and others Varro, who disagreed by two years in the epoch which they fixed for the foundation of Rome. He evidently compared the ancient annals from year to

<sup>1</sup> Gibbon, *Miscellaneous Works*, Vol. V. p. 371.

<sup>2</sup> Niebuhr, II. pp. 17, 223, 472.

year ; and while thus writing an insulated portion of his history, he seems, in a great measure, to have forgotten prior events, and to have been ignorant of those which followed. It would appear, that he had not read Polybius till he began to write concerning that period of the Roman history of which Polybius treats. When he came to study the Greek author, he found an early treaty with the Carthaginians, in the year of Tarquin's expulsion ; of the existence of which he had been previously ignorant, and which contradicts some of his relations, but he did not revert to amend what he had formerly written. Thus, it appears from the treaty, that the Carthaginians at its date were in possession of part of Sicily. But Livy places the first expedition of the Carthaginians to that island in 324, about eighty years after the conclusion of the treaty.

Considering the period in which he lived, the *impartiality* and sincerity of Livy passed through a fiery ordeal. But though his youth was spent in a period of civil war and violent faction, he seems to have imbibed none of the feelings of a partisan ; and in this respect, perhaps, his residence at Padua, far from the dissensions and excitement of the capital, was favourable to his impartiality. The absolute domination of Augustus, and the favour which, on Livy's arrival at Rome, the emperor extended to him, might well have corrupted the fidelity of a republican historian. But he honoured the memory of the conquered patriots in the court of the conquering prince. He did justice to



the greatest enemies of the house of Cæsar, and so far ventured to espouse the cause of Pompey, that Augustus termed him the Pompeian.<sup>1</sup> In the thirty-five books of his history which remain, he speaks of Augustus with such reserve and moderation of praise, that we may safely infer that no part of his history was polluted by extravagant adulation; and that he had not bestowed, even on the wise Augustus and mild Mæcenæ, such panegyrics as were lavished on Tiberius and Sejanus, by a servile successor. Nowhere do we find him disguising motives under false colours, nor exciting by rhetorical arts undue pity or indignation; nor exalting the glory of his characters by eulogy, nor diminishing it by detraction.

But though the disposition of Livy might be too candid to have recourse to such unworthy arts—though his spirit might be too free and noble to eulogize the oppressors of his country's freedom, at the expense of its defenders, it cannot be denied, that he has exhibited extreme partiality in all that relates to that country itself. He almost invariably disguises or palliates the crimes and vices of the Romans, and exaggerates their exploits, their successes, and their virtues. He extols them beyond measure in the speculation, as to what might have been the result of an invasion of Italy by Alexander the Great. Their defeats he imputes to chance or fortune, their victories to themselves. In an enemy he blames the same

<sup>1</sup> Tacit. *Annal.* Lib. IV. c. 34.

arts and stratagems which he praises when exercised by the Romans. He speaks with little reprehension of many acts of cruelty committed by his countrymen, and their ingratitude to their greatest men ; and on the other hand, he expresses resentment against the Rhodians when pleading for liberty.<sup>1</sup> In general, when the annalists differ from each other in their accounts of any transaction—a negotiation, a treaty, or a battle—we find him preferring that story which is most honourable to the Roman name. Two remarkable instances may be quoted, amongst many, in which he has departed from truth, in order to conceal what he thought was disgraceful to his countrymen.—He represents them as having treated on equal terms with Porsenna ; whereas it appears from a passage in Tacitus, that the city was surrendered to him ;<sup>2</sup> and from another in Pliny, that the Tuscan king, if he did not actually take possession of it by capitulation, at least dictated the terms of a most ignominious peace.<sup>3</sup> But Livy passes over this treaty, the most important, though most mortifying occurrence of the war, and dazzles the reader by displaying the romantic exploits of Horatius Cocles and Scævola ; and at length, with utter improbability, he represents Porsenna as so transported with admiration at the valour of the Romans, that he sought a pretext to draw off his troops, and retire to his own states. The Romans bargained to redeem their city from the Gauls by gold ; but

<sup>1</sup> Lachmann, *De Font. Hist. Liv.* p. 88.

<sup>2</sup> *Hist. Lib.* III. c. 72.

<sup>3</sup> *Hist. Nat.* XXXIV. c. 14.

Livy prevents this disgrace, by sending Furius Camillus to interpose, and to defeat them on the spot, and again on their return—thus preferring the vain-glorious legends of the Furian family to the positive testimony of Polybius.

The alleged *credulity* of Livy consists in his relation of stories, which are manifestly fables, and sometimes even of prodigies, which we know to be physically impossible. With regard to the current fictions concerning the early times of Rome, Livy, while he relates them as characteristic of the period, and in deference to the vanity of his countrymen, warns us near the commencement of his work, that he does not vouch for the truth of all he writes ; and in the course of his narrative, he frequently admits the obscurity of the Roman history in its first ages, and the difficulty which he finds in reconciling the differences of the authors whom he consulted. He generally passes over the most palpable historic fictions with rapidity, or pauses only to express a doubt. Thus, what he tells of the founder of Rome is embellished by many fabulous circumstances, but he is careful to caution his readers in the judgment they are to form of them, instead of relating them with that confidence and circumstantial minuteness which are the characteristics of the work of the Halicarnassian, whose object was to impose on his readers. It may also be remarked, that relations which now appear to us in the hues of poetical fiction, will be divested of that colouring, when we view them through the proper medium of the manners and customs of the age. To take one example,—the descriptions of single



combats between the leaders of hostile armies, which make the battles in Livy, particularly that of Regillus, resemble the combats in the *Iliad* of Homer, may have represented, not unaptly, the state of military discipline at a period, when, the cavalry forming the strength of an army, and being composed from the equestrian ranks of the Commonwealth, personal conflicts among the chiefs were courted as in the days of chivalry, and the prowess of a brave and active leader might powerfully influence the fortune of the day.

But this will scarcely solve the problem concerning a single prodigy which Livy has recounted ; for oxen and statues spoke as little in the time of Tarquin, as they now talk in Britain. The history, however, which Livy had undertaken to write, required that he should not altogether suppress those things which were generally believed to have happened—which he found related in the *Annals*, and which formed part of the religion commonly received by his countrymen. When we recollect the attention that was paid by the Roman people to the auspices and every species of augury, and the influence which such prognostics and ceremonies exercised even on affairs of state, it is obvious, that had he altogether abstained from bringing under notice the portents and omens, by which the favour or displeasure of the gods was supposed to be manifested, his work would not have presented a full picture of the opinions and institutions of the people, whose history he recorded. Livy, besides, frequently and clearly explains himself on this head, attributing

most of the pretended prodigies which he relates, and which made so much noise, to an ignorant and credulous superstition. He represents the supposed intercourse of Numa with Egeria as a mere political device.<sup>1</sup> Some miracles he treats with such contempt that he does not think it worth his pains to affirm or refute them; and of others he declares, that they were “temere credita, motis semel in religionem animis.”<sup>2</sup>

There seems, therefore, little reason to suspect the veracity of Livy, on account of the prodigies which he has admitted into his history,<sup>3</sup> since the author does not vouch for them as authentic, but merely exhibits them to complete and fill up his picture of a superstitious age, and could no more have omitted them than a historian of the middle ages could have passed over those ordeals and judicial combats by which guilt or innocence was believed to be miraculously revealed.

Veracity and fidelity are the chief and indeed the

<sup>1</sup> Lib. I. c. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. XXI. c. 62.

<sup>3</sup> His credibility was, however, called in question on this account, by Joecherus, a professor at Leipsic, in his Dissertation *De Suspectâ Livii Fide*, Leipsic, 1743. His defence was undertaken by Schwabe, in his *Vindiciæ Credulitatis Livii*, Gotting. 1773-4. The *Adeisidæmon, sive Titus Livius a Superstitione Vindicatus*, written by Toland, and published in 1709, gave rise to a series of answers and refutations, in which general questions of religion came to be mixed up with the discussions concerning the superstition of Livy. See Bosius, *Schediasma quo T. Livium superstitiose Antiquitati diffidentem sistit*, Leips. 1739, 4to, and Jac. Fayi, *Defensio Religionis contra duas Dissertationes Jo. Tolandi*.

indispensable duties of the historian. The *ornaments* of historic composition may be divided into, 1st, Sentiments or reflections: 2d, Delineation of character: 3d, Style.

History, in its original state, especially in Rome, was exclusively confined to narrative—the reader being left to form his own observations on the deeds or events recorded. Previous to the time of Livy, Sallust had converted history from a mere relation of the measures of statesmen and exploits of warriors, into a vehicle of philosophic induction and reflection. Having set this great example, there was little danger that history should ever have again relapsed into a mere gazette of antiquity. Mankind would no longer read history with the sole view of replenishing the memory, or amusing the imagination. Moral and political instruction would be required by them, and it would in consequence be incumbent on the historian to extend his view beyond the immediate sphere of the actions he related, in order to disclose the springs which gave them motion and the effects which they produced.

Living in an age of refinement and speculative inquiry, and in the society of the most subtle politicians who had ever yet intrigued on the stage of the world, it was necessary for our historian to imbue his work with a spirit of philosophic reflection, in order to render it worthy the perusal of Augustus, Pollio, and Mæcenæas.

Some of the remarks of Livy possess much force and depth, and their condensation sometimes reminds us of the profound sense of Tacitus. He obtrudes,



however, his own opinions and suspicions much less frequently than that historian, and when they are expressed, they are either thrown into the orations of his principal characters, or delivered with extreme modesty and diffidence. On no occasion do they start out like formal aphorisms or maxims from the body of the narrative, but are imperceptibly interwoven in the thread of the discourse. Livy assigns more to chance and the passions of individuals than Tacitus, who attributes all to deep-laid policy.

In painting the disposition, talents, and manners, of the chief actors in the events of his history, Livy has been much less prolix than Sallust or Velleius Paterculus, and has generally left the reader to draw his inferences concerning characters from the facts. He never indulges in virulent invective or warm panegyric; yet he has given us many beautiful portraits, which always seem drawn from life, and always deeply interest us in the fate and fortunes of those of whom they bear the resemblance. The general character, too, of the ancient Romans is finely portrayed. Their probity, simplicity, frugality, and reverence for the gods, are everywhere held up to view, and contrasted with the vices, irreligion, and luxury of modern times.

Of all the ornaments of historic composition, it derives, perhaps, its chief embellishment from a graceful and perspicuous *style*; and he who wishes to reach perfection in this high department of literature, must, after he has collected and arranged his facts, and es-

estimated his characters, be careful to embody the result of his researches in language worthy of the theme.

The style of the ancient annals was inelegant and jejune; but, in the progress of history, composition came to be regarded as a matter of primary importance. It, indeed, was perhaps unfortunate, that so much value was ultimately attached to it, since the Latin historians at length considered the merit of history as consisting more in fine writing than in an accurate detail of facts.

There can be no doubt that the tragic writings of the Romans had much influence on their general literature; and it has been alleged, that Roman tragedies operated on the style as well as the whole arrangement of the most eminent historical works, particularly those of Livy and Tacitus. "Every one," it has been said, "who is but moderately acquainted with classic antiquity, will find the same difference between the historical compositions of Rome and Greece which subsists between the oratorical works of these nations: the noble simplicity, the chaste, austere, and august character of the Greek historians, is far removed from that dramatical art which presides over Roman history, and which, admirable and unparalleled as it is, yet causes us often to call in question the truth of the fact, or at least of the combination of facts. On this coincident operation of tragedy among the Romans upon the most important branches of their literature, the following remark may be ventured:—That this species of poetry performed with them the same office, though different in manner and

effect, as epic poetry with the Greeks." Dramatic composition was no doubt as prevalent and more excellent in Greece than in Rome ; but it was not the earliest or only form in which poetry appeared. The Epic and Lyric Muse preceded their sister, and shared the triumphs of Melpomene. But the literature of Rome commenced with the drama, the literary taste of the public was formed at the theatre, and, till the time of Lucretius, scarcely any poetry was written except for the stage.

None of the Roman historians estimated the qualifications of style more highly than Livy, who wrote expressly for the purpose of erecting a suitable monument to the glory of his country. Taking his facts on the assertion of the old annalists, he was chiefly anxious to give a more elegant turn to what was rude and unpolished in the language of the preceding ages. No modern critic has ever ventured to deny the spirit and beauty of his narrative, and the eloquence of his harangues. His words are well chosen, his expressions dignified, his periods harmonious. His use of some obsolete phrases, which he copied from the annals, have a good effect in the early part of his history, by giving to the narrative an air of antiquity and appropriate simplicity. The accusation of too much diffuseness is as old as the time of Caligula ; but the magnitude of his design, and nobleness of his thoughts, required a copious style ; and, diffuse as he may be, he is never languid or tedious.

That fastidious critic, and envious detracter of his literary contemporaries, Asinius Pollio, had said, that



there was a certain Patavinity in the style of Livy, by which he meant to convey an idea, that there was something in his expressions which bespoke a citizen of Padua, and which would not have appeared in the style of a native of Rome. It is evident from the passage in Quintilian<sup>1</sup> where this criticism of Pollio is reported, that it applied entirely to provincial words or phrases, not altogether consonant to the refined urbanity of Rome, which could not be so easily communicated to strangers as the freedom of the city. The opinion of Beni, who supposed that, because the Paduans were all stanch republicans, the Patavinity of Livy must have consisted in his political partiality to the faction of Pompey, appears to be entirely erroneous; for such principles would not have been blamed by Pollio, who rather affected old republican sentiments,<sup>2</sup> and extolled the Pompeians. The notion adopted by Budæus,<sup>3</sup> who thinks that Livy's Patavinity lay in his enmity to the Gauls, who were the natural foes of the Paduans, and often ravaged their territories, is equally without foundation. Nor is the conjecture of Barthius and Le Vayer, that it consisted in an undue partiality for his native district, much

<sup>1</sup> In Tito Livio, miræ facundiae viro, putat inesse Pollio Asinius quandam Patavinitem. Quare, si fieri potest, et verba omnia, et vox, hujus alumnum urbis oleant: ut Oratio Romana plane videatur, non civitate donata.—Quintil. *Inst. Orat.* Lib. VIII. c. 1.—See also Lib. I. c. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Tacit. *Annal.* Lib. IV. c. 34.

<sup>3</sup> *De Philosophiâ*, Fol. 22.

more successful. Morhof, which was no difficult task, has refuted all these theories;<sup>1</sup> and justly believing that the Patavinity of which Livy was accused was solely exhibited in style, he has entered into an elaborate discussion concerning what defect or blemish was implied in the word Patavinity. Some, as he informs us, have thought, with Laurentius Pignorius,<sup>2</sup> that it appeared in a certain orthography peculiar to the Paduans, as *sibe* for *sibi*, *quase* for *quasi*. Ptolomæus Flavius thinks that it lay in the diffuseness of style, to which, this author says, the Paduans, both ancient and modern, have been addicted in all their compositions.<sup>3</sup> This is the opinion which seems on the whole to be adopted by Morhof himself, and by Funccius; and it is founded on Pollio having affected an admiration of that succinct and jejune mode of composition, which was erroneously considered as approaching the Attic taste, and which Brutus and Calvus employed in oratory, in opposition to the more copious style of eloquence exercised by Cicero and Hortensius.

Pollio himself would probably have been puzzled to define his precise notion of Patavinity; but I am inclined to think, that it probably applied to some peculiarities of expression which were the remains of the ancient dialects of Italy. There was not originally, as is well known, one uniform speech in that country. It was inhabited by a great variety of tribes;

<sup>1</sup> *De Patavinitate Livianâ Liber.*

<sup>2</sup> *Origine Paduane*, c. 17.

<sup>3</sup> *Centuria Conjectaneorum*, c. 45.

and hence, diversities between the Roman and municipal dialects continued to a certain extent even after Rome, having attained the sovereignty, imposed her language on the states of Italy. It appears, though this is a subject of controversy, that there was a refined and vulgar idiom at Rome, and the difference would be still wider between the urban and provincial tongues. The boast of the former was to be free from everything rustic or foreign, and to possess a certain undefinable purity, simplicity, and grace. It was either in a want of this charm, or in some provincial expressions, that Patavinity must have consisted—if indeed its existence in the work of Livy was not altogether imaginary on the part of Pollio. But neither Erasmus, who has repeated the censure, nor any other writer, so far as I know, has pointed out an example of Patavinity. Few of the great Latin authors were Romans by birth. The only names of which the capital can boast, are those of Lucretius, Cæsar, and Varro. Were all the other poets, orators, and historians, free from provincial idioms, and did Livy alone retain his Patavinity? He was older, indeed, when he first visited the capital than Horace or Ovid, but he was not so far advanced in life as Virgil or Catullus, when they first found their way to Rome from Mantua and Verona.

A number of other historians flourished during the reign of Augustus, and were nearly contemporary with Livy, but their works have for the most part perished.



## TROGUS POMPEIUS,

one of this class, was born in the country of the Vocontii in Gaul, now Dauphiny. He derived his second name from the great Pompey, who had bestowed on his grandfather the rights of Roman citizenship, in the time of the war with Sertorius. His father, however, deserted the fortunes of the patron of his family, and became a secretary of Julius Cæsar.<sup>1</sup> His work consisted of forty-four books, and was entitled *Historiæ Philippicæ, et Totius Mundi Origines, et Terræ Situs*. It was called *Historia Philippica*, because the greater part related to the history of the Macedonian empire, founded by Philip, father of Alexander. But, though this was the principal subject, the author contrived, in the form of episodes or introductions, to connect with it the history of most other nations, from the first king of Assyria to his own time.

The book itself has perished,<sup>2</sup> but we possess an abridgement of it by Justin, who lived in the time of the Antonines,<sup>3</sup> and whose epitome was probably the cause of the original work having been neglected and

<sup>1</sup> Justin. Lib. XLIII. 5. 11.

<sup>2</sup> It is cited, however, as extant, by Priscian, a grammarian of the sixth century. Aldus Manutius writes, in one of his letters, that a learned friend possessed a full copy of Trogus Pompeius, and that he hoped shortly to have an opportunity of publishing it. "Verum amicus iste," says Vossius, "Aldo imposuit. Sanè, necdum prodiit; neque, puto, unquam prodibit." *De Histor. Lat.* Lib. I. c. 19.

<sup>3</sup> Vossius, *De Histor. Lat.* Lib. I. c. 32. There have been dif-

lost. The abbreviator has selected the facts which he conceived would prove most interesting, and has passed over those which he thought could afford neither entertainment nor instruction in the way of example.<sup>1</sup> He has unfortunately omitted a great deal of topographical information, which probably appeared to him little amusing or useful, but which would have been of much interest in modern times, on account of our present imperfect knowledge of ancient geography.<sup>2</sup>

Several dissertations have lately been written concerning the sources whence Trogus Pompeius derived the facts of this universal history.<sup>3</sup> Its first six books, which are introductory, and relate to the Assyrians, Persians, and ancient Greeks, previous to the time of Philip, were in a great measure compiled from Herodotus, and Ctesias the Cnidian. The four following books, which contained the life of Philip, were translated from Theopompus of Chios, who wrote a complete history of that monarch. The account of the reign of Alexander has been so much mutilated in the epitome of Justin, that the critics find it almost impossible to discover what authorities have been prin-

ferent opinions, however, with regard to the age in which Justin wrote, some authors placing it after the transference of the seat of empire to Constantinople.

<sup>1</sup> Omissis his quæ nec cognoscendi voluptate jucunda, nec exemplo erant necessaria.

<sup>2</sup> Vossius, *De Histor. Lat. Lib. I. c. 19.* Schœll, *Hist. Abregée de la Litter. Rom. T. II. p. 57.*

<sup>3</sup> Heeren de *Trogi Pompeii, ejusque Epitomatoris Justin, Fontibus. Comment. Societ. Reg. Scient. Götting. 1803, T. XV.*

cipally followed. For the wars of Alexander's successors, Trogus chiefly consulted Jerome of Cardia, and Phylarchus. The six books, from the 30th to the 36th, which comprehended the campaigns of the Romans in Greece, against the Achaians and Macedonians, and in Syria against Antiochus, have been extracted from Polybius. From a comparison of the epitome of Justin with some fragments of Posidonius of Rhodes preserved by Athenæus, it appears that he had been the chief guide of Trogus, for the histories of Mithridates, the Ptolemies of Egypt, the Parthians and Jews, which were related in the six following books. The digression concerning the Jews is full of mistakes and confusion. Every one is aware of the erroneous notions entertained with regard to this race in the days of Augustus, and even in the age of Tacitus; and Justin, at whatever period he may have lived, has been at no pains to correct the errors of the work which he abridges. That part of the last two books which relates the ancient history of Rome, has been copied from Diocles the Peparethian, who was also the tainted authority to which Fabius Pictor unfortunately trusted, and from which have flowed all the fables concerning Mars, the Vestal Virgin, the Wolf, and Romulus and Remus.

#### QUINTUS DELLIUS

wrote an account of Antony's disastrous expedition against Phraates, King of Parthia, which the author



himself accompanied; and this history was the chief authority resorted to by Plutarch and Appian, for their details concerning that campaign. The character of Dellius was but little respected, and he was proverbial, even in the unprincipled age in which he lived, for his political tergiversation. At the commencement of the civil wars, he was in the service of Dolabella, from which he passed to the army of Cassius, and then espoused the side of Antony. Amid the revelries of Alexandria, he rashly said at table, that Antony's friends were served with sour wine, while Sarmentus (who was a favourite buffoon of Augustus) drank Falernian at Rome.<sup>1</sup> This remark so much excited the enmity of Cleopatra, that, shortly before the battle of Actium, he was forced for safety to fly to Cæsar, by whom he was highly favoured, and drank as much old Falernian as he chose, till the day of his death.<sup>2</sup>

#### LUCIUS ARRUNTIUS,

who commanded the left wing of Octavius' fleet, at the battle of Actium, and was subsequently consul with Claudius Æserninus, in the year 732, wrote a full history of the Carthaginian wars. Though he

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch, *Vit. Antonii*.

<sup>2</sup> Seu te in remoto gramine, per dies  
Festos, reclinatum beâris  
Interiore notâ Falerni.

Horat. *Od. Jib. II. 3.* Ad Dellium.

flourished in the early part of the reign of Augustus, his life was protracted to that of Tiberius. He had been rendered an object of suspicion in one of the last conversations which that jealous tyrant held with his predecessor, concerning the succession to the empire, and the characters of those who were likely to obstruct his elevation. In the course of it, Augustus said, that M. Lepidus had the talents, but not the wish to reign—that Asinius Gallus desired the sovereignty, but was unequal to the attempt—that Arruntius was not unworthy of the empire, and if an opportunity offered, would endeavour to obtain it. The suspicions thus instilled into the mind of Tiberius, received strength from the wealth, the promptitude of character, the various accomplishments, and general popularity of Arruntius. In one of the first meetings of the senate, held after his accession, and when he as yet affected an unwillingness to undertake the cares of empire, Arruntius, who followed Asinius Gallus in the debate, gave additional offence by the speech which he delivered.<sup>1</sup> He escaped at this time with impunity; but, before the end of the reign of Tiberius, he was accused of disaffection to the emperor; and, foreseeing the fate which probably awaited him, sought a voluntary death by opening his veins.<sup>2</sup>

In his history of the Punic Wars, Arruntius was chiefly anxious to imitate the style of Sallust, but he copied him with little taste or judgment, adopting all

<sup>1</sup> Tacit. *Annal.* Lib. I. c. 13.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* Lib. VI. c. 47, 48.

his greatest defects, and repeating his peculiar expressions to satiety. Of this several examples are given by Seneca, in his epistles, from which it appears that he sought after those blemishes which were accidental in the compositions of Sallust.<sup>1</sup>

## TITUS LABIENUS,

a declaimer and historian, is chiefly known from some passages in Seneca, the rhetorician, who informs us that his history was marked by an excessive rage for liberty, and its vituperation of all ranks and classes of men.<sup>2</sup> He used to read it aloud in assemblies of his fellow citizens: but he was wont to pass over the more violent passages, saying, that what he thus omitted would be perused after his death. He was the first author whose works were burned by public authority. They were condemned to the flames, towards the close of the reign of Augustus, by a decree of the senate. Labienus could not endure to survive the records of his genius: he made himself be carried to the sepulchre of his ancestors, where he was shut in, and expired.<sup>3</sup> Previous to the invention of printing, obnoxious writings had seldom such general circulation among the people, as to excite the apprehensions of a ruler, or to call for their suppression by

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.* 114. Est apud Sallustium—Exercitum argento fecit; id est, pecuniâ paravit. Hoc Arruntius amare cœpit: posuit illud omnibus paginis.

<sup>2</sup> *Controvers.* Lib. V. in *Pref.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*



the authority of the state. When this measure, however, was at length resorted to, it could be much more effectually executed than in the present age, when a work, though it bear all the poison of the Hydra, multiplies and revives from the very means which are used for its extinction. "It is fortunate," says Seneca, the rhetorician, "that this mode of punishment only commenced when works of genius began to fail, and that it had not occurred to the triumvirs to proscribe the works of Cicero."

It would appear, however, that all the copies of Labienus' history, had not been destroyed; for Caligula, while affecting to play the moralist and the patriot at the commencement of his reign, allowed his writings to be sought after, and read—since, as he remarked, it was of the utmost importance to him, to encourage such compositions, in order that all the actions of his life should be transmitted to posterity.<sup>1</sup>

The works of

#### CREMUTIUS CORDUS

experienced a similar fate with those of Labienus. He wrote during the reign of Augustus, and is said to have read to that prince a history, in which he styled Brutus and Cassius the last of the Romans.<sup>2</sup> Augustus did not take pleasure, like Caligula or Nero, in cruel or arbitrary acts; and he was so skilful a politician,

<sup>1</sup> Sueton. *in Calig.* c. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Sueton. *in Tiber.* c. 61.

that he never, like Tiberius, suspected a plot or apprehended a danger, when none in fact existed. He knew that his throne was then too firmly established to be shaken by the empty echoes of liberty, and he heard, perhaps with secret satisfaction, that Brutus and Cassius would have no successors among his subjects. The writings of Cordus, however, were suppressed under the reign of Tiberius; but his daughter Marcia saved a copy which was extant in the time of Seneca. The appellation of the last of the Romans which he bestowed on Brutus and Cassius, was made the pretext of a capital charge during the administration of Sejanus, who had taken umbrage at an observation which had escaped him with regard to a statue of that minister placed in the theatre of Pompey.<sup>1</sup> Two infamous informers, Satrius Secundus and Pinarius Natta, came forward as his accusers. Their connexion with the minister of Tiberius was itself ominous of his fate. The emperor heard his defence in person, in the senate, with a stern countenance, which announced to him the sentence he was about to receive. Certain of death, he pleaded his cause with a spirit and eloquence which he perhaps might not have exerted had any hope of safety remained. "So irreproachable," said he, "are my actions, that only my words are accused. But it is not alleged that even these have been directed against the sacred persons comprehended in the laws against violated majesty. I am charged with having extolled

<sup>1</sup> Seneca, *Consol. ad Marciam*, c. 22.

Brutus and Cassius, of whose actions many have written, and whom no one has mentioned without honour." After establishing this by the example of Livy, Pollio, and Messala, he mentioned Cicero's panegyric of Cato, which Cæsar contented himself with answering by a similar production, and also a number of other compositions, as the epistles of Antony, and the harangues of Brutus, all filled with opprobrious defamations of Augustus. " But Julius and Augustus bore all these attacks, and even allowed the writings to remain unsuppressed ; and in this conduct there was as much wisdom as moderation. For those things which are despised are quickly forgotten ; if they excite indignation, they seem to be acknowledged as true. I mention not the Greeks, among whom not only liberty, but license of speech, remained unpunished, or words were avenged by words alone. But of all things, it was the most perfectly free to pass a judgment on those whom death had alike removed from favour or odium. But have I, by my harangues, inflamed the Roman people with the spirit of civil rage, while Brutus and Cassius were yet in arms, and filling the plains of Philippi ? They have now been slain seventy years, and their memory is only preserved among authors in the same manner as it exists in their statues, which even the conqueror did not destroy. Impartial posterity renders every one justice ; and if I be condemned, those will not be wanting who will remember me along with Cassius and Brutus."<sup>1</sup> Having thus spoken,

<sup>1</sup> Tacit. *Annal.* IV. 34.



he left the senate-house, and returned home, resolved to perish by abstaining from sustenance. He retired to his own chamber, where he partly exhausted his strength by the excessive use of the warm bath. That he might deceive his daughter, he pretended that he eat in his own apartment; and, in order to carry on the deception, he concealed, or threw over the window, part of the provisions which were brought to him. While at supper with his family, he excused himself from partaking of their meal, on the pretence that he had already eaten sufficiently in his own chamber. He persisted in this abstinence for three days; but on the fourth, the extreme exhaustion and weakness of his body became manifest. It was then that he embraced his daughter, announced to her his approaching end, and informed her that she neither could preserve his existence longer, nor ought to attempt it. Having shut himself up in his chamber, he ordered the light to be completely excluded, and expired at the very moment when his infamous accusers were deliberating in court on the forms and proceedings to be adopted at his trial.<sup>1</sup>

There were several other historians of this period, concerning whom we have no farther information than of the subjects of their histories. P. Volumnius, who was himself in the army of Brutus, wrote an account of the war which that leader carried on, in the name of the republic, against Antony and Octavius. Vossius says he is the same Volumnius, whom (according

<sup>1</sup> Seneca, *Consolatio ad Marciam*, c. 22.

to Plutarch) Brutus addressed in Greek after the battle of Philippi, and conjured him, by their common studies and mutual pursuit of philosophy, to hold his sword, and aid him to give the last fatal blow. Volumnius, however, and several others, declined this sad office, which was at length performed by Strato. Aufidius Bassus undertook a history of the civil wars, and also of the campaigns of the Romans in Germany. The former of these works was left unfinished, but it was afterwards completed in thirty additional books by the elder Pliny.<sup>1</sup>

Many authors of this period also employed themselves in drawing up memoirs of distinguished families at Rome, and biographies of illustrious characters. Vitellius Eulogius, the freedman of the Quæstor Quintus Vitellius, with a view of performing an acceptable office to his patron, wrote a history of the Vitellian family, in which he was pleased to affirm that it was descended from Faunus, king of the Aborigines, and the goddess Vitellia, a highly respectable divinity worshipped by the ancient Italians.<sup>2</sup> Bibulus, the son of Calpurnius Bibulus, wrote a life of his relative Brutus, and Julius Marathus, the freedman of Augustus, composed memoirs of his imperial master.<sup>3</sup> Suetonius quotes him as having said in his work that Augustus was of low stature, but so admirably proportioned, that his smallness was scarcely observable, except when some taller person was standing beside him.

<sup>1</sup> Plin. *Epist.* Lib. III. ep. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Sueton. *in Vitellio*, c. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Sueton. *in August.* c. 79.

The statesmen and warriors of the Augustan age did not disdain to illustrate this species of composition, by memoirs of themselves or of their great contemporaries.

Augustus himself wrote memoirs of his times in thirteen books, from his first appearance in public life, till the war with the Cantabrians, when he had reached his 37th year.<sup>1</sup> Both Dio Cassius and Appian cite these memoirs, but few fragments have been preserved from them. This emperor also showed his zeal for historical truth by two important memorials which he left behind him. One was a statistical table of the empire, to be read in the senate after his death, including a summary of the military establishment and distribution of the legions, the revenue of the state, the public disbursements, and the arrears of taxes that were due, with a reference to the persons in whose hands the vouchers were to be found.<sup>2</sup> The other memorial contained a brief record of the principal events of his reign, which he ordered to be engraved on brazen tablets, placed near his mausoleum. The inhabitants of Ancyra in Galatia, as is well known, soon after the death of Augustus, erected in their city a monument, on which was engraved a copy of this inscription. Some mutilated, and scarcely legible fragments of it were discovered in Asia, by the traveller Busbequius, about the middle of the 16th century.

<sup>1</sup> Sueton. *in August.* c. 85.

<sup>2</sup> Ferguson's *Roman Republic*, c. 40.



In consequence of the example of Augustus, his courtiers and ministers undertook similar compositions with those on which he had employed himself. Agrippa wrote memoirs of his own life, and Messala a history of the most illustrious families in Rome. Seeing with indignation the effigies of one of the Levini placed among his own ancestors, and observing that the Salutian race, by means of adoption, were gradually creeping into the lineage of the Scipios, he commenced his treatise on genealogies, in order to clear these illustrious pedigrees from the intrusion of strangers.<sup>1</sup>

I am not certain whether, among the biographers of this period, I ought to class

#### CORNELIUS NEPOS,

so well known to every schoolboy as the author of the *Vitæ Excellentium Imperatorum*, and the Life of Titus Pomponius Atticus, the celebrated friend and correspondent of Cicero. There can be no doubt that an author of the name of Cornelius Nepos lived at Rome during this period, and enjoyed considerable celebrity. He is generally believed to have been born at Hostilia, (now Ostiglia,) a small town situated on the banks of the Po, near the confines of the Veronese and Mantuan territories. The year of his birth is uncertain, but he first came to Rome during the dictatorship of Julius Cæsar. He does

<sup>1</sup> Plin. *Hist. Nat.* Lib. XXXV. c. 2.

not appear to have filled any public office in the state ; but his merit soon procured him the friendship of the most eminent men who at that time adorned the capital of the world. Catullus dedicated to him the volume of poems, which he had privately read and approved of before their publication.<sup>1</sup> Nepos addressed one of his own works to Pomponius Atticus, with whom also he was on terms of intimacy.<sup>2</sup> He likewise obtained the esteem and affection of Cicero,<sup>3</sup> who speaks of his writings with high approbation in one of his letters, and in another alludes with much sympathy to the loss which Nepos had sustained by the death of a favourite son.<sup>4</sup> It farther appears, that Cicero had frequently corresponded with him, for Macrobius quotes the second book of that orator's epistles to Cornelius Nepos.<sup>5</sup>

It is thus probable that some of our author's works had been prepared, or were in the course of composition, previous to the death of Cicero ; but they were not given to the public till early in the reign of Au-

<sup>1</sup> Cui dono lepidum novum libellum,  
Aridâ modo pumice expolitum ?  
Corneli, tibi : namque tu solebas  
Meas esse aliquid putare nugas.

<sup>2</sup> Hoc non auditum, sed cognitum prædicamus : sæpe enim, propter familiaritatem, domesticis rebus interfuimus.

*Vita Attici*, c. 13.

<sup>3</sup> M. Ciceronis, ut qui maximè, amicus familiaris fuit.

Au. Gellius, *Noct. Att. Lib. XV. c. 28.*

<sup>4</sup> *Epist. ad Attic. Lib. XVI. ep. 5, 14.*

<sup>5</sup> *Satur. Lib. II. c. 1.* See also Sueton. in *Jul. Cæsar. c. 55.*

gustus, since Eusebius considers him as flourishing in the fourth year of that emperor.<sup>1</sup>

The precise period of his death is unknown, and it can only be ascertained that he survived Atticus, whose biography he writes, and who died in the 722d year of the city. Some chronological accounts extend his life till the commencement of the Christian era, but it is scarcely possible that one who was a distinguished literary character in the time of Catullus could have existed till that epoch.<sup>2</sup>

Whether the Cornelius Nepos concerning whose life these circumstances have been gleaned, was the author of the well-known book entitled *Vitæ Excellentium Imperatorum*, has been a subject, ever since it was first printed, of much debate and controversy among critics and commentators. The discussion originated in the following circumstances:—

A person of the name of Æmilius Probus, who lived in the fourth century, during the reign of Theodosius the Great, presented to his sovereign a copy of the *Vitæ Imperatorum*, and prefixed to it some barbarous verses, which left it doubtful whether he meant

<sup>1</sup> Ap. Vossius, *de Histor. Lat. Lib. I. c. 14.*

<sup>2</sup> Fabricius makes a curious mistake concerning the death of Cornelius Nepos, in saying that he was poisoned in 724 by his freedman Callisthenes, and in citing Plutarch's life of Lucullus as his authority for the fact. (*Bibliotheca Lat. Lib. I. c. 6, § 1.*) The passage in Plutarch only bears, that C. Nepos had somewhere said that the mind of Lucullus had become impaired in his old age, in consequence of a potion administered to him by his freedman Callisthenes.



to announce himself as the author, or merely as the transcriber, of the work :—

Vade, liber noster, fato meliore memento :  
 Cùm leget hæc Dominus, te sciat esse meum.  
 Nec timeas fulvo strictos diademate crines—  
 Ridentes blandum vel pietate oculos.  
 Communis cunctis, hominem sed regna tenere  
 Se meminit, vincit hinc magis ille homines.  
 Ornentur steriles, facilis tectura libelli,  
 Theodosio, et doctis carmina nuda placent.  
 Si rogat *auctorem*, paullatim detege nostrum  
 Tunc domino nomen ; me sciat esse Probum.  
 Corpore in hoc manus est genitoris, avique, meaque :  
 Felices, domini quæ meruere manus.

These lines, being prefixed to the most ancient MSS. of the *Vitæ Excellentium Imperatorum*, induced a general belief during the Middle Ages, that Æmilius Probus was himself the author of the biographies. The *Editio Princeps*, which was printed by Jenson in 1471, was entitled *Probi Æmilii Liber de Virorum Excellentium Vitâ*. All subsequent editions were inscribed with the name of Æmilius Probus, till the appearance of that of Lambinus in 1568, in which the opinion that Probus was the author was first called in question, and the honour of the work restored to Cornelius Nepos. Since that time the *Vitæ Excellentium Imperatorum* have been usually published with his name ; but various suppositions and conjectures still continued to be formed with regard to the share which Æmilius Probus might have had in the MS. which he presented to Theodosius. Barthius

was of opinion, that in this MS. Probus had abridged the original work of Nepos, in the same manner as Justin had epitomised the history of Trogus Pompeius; and in this way he accounts for some solecisms and barbarisms of expression, which would not have occurred in the genuine and uncorrupted work of an Augustan writer.<sup>1</sup> Since the time of Barthius, however, this hypothesis, which divides the credit of the work between Cornelius Nepos and Probus, has been generally rejected, and most commentators have adopted the opinion, That Probus was merely the transcriber of the work of Nepos, and that he did not mean to signify more in the lines which he prefixed to his MS. They argue that it is clear from a passage in the commencement of the life of Pelopidas, that the work had not been reduced, as Barthius supposes, to a compendium, but had originally been written in a brief style and abridged form: “Vereor, si res explicare incipiam, non vitam ejus enarrare, sed historiam videre scribere: si tantummodo summas attigero, ne rudibus literarum Græcarum minus lucidè appareat, quantus fuerit ille vir. Itaque utrique rei occurram, quantum potero; et medebor cùm satietati, tum ignorantiae lectorum.” So far from admitting those solecisms of expression for which Barthius thinks it necessary to account, Vossius chiefly founds his arguments in favour of the classical authenticity of the work on that Augustan style, which neither Æmilius Probus, nor any other writer of the time of Theodosius could have at-

<sup>1</sup> *Adversaria*, XXIV. 18. XXV. 15.

tained—"Ac nec Æmilium, nec Theodosiani ævi quenquam, eorum esse librorum auctorem, abundè arguit pura et Romana dictio."<sup>1</sup> "Ego verò," says Funccius, adopting the same opinion, "adhuc ejusmodi nihil, quàm maximè studerem, deprehendere potui: ut vel nihil sapiam, vel æqualis pro re natâ rerumque circumstantiis elegantia, et inaffectedata Latinitas ubique esse videatur."<sup>2</sup>

A very recent attempt, however, has been made again to vindicate for Æmilius Probus the honour of the composition, in Rinck's "Saggio per restituire a Æmilio Probo il libro di Cornelio Nepote." To myself it appears, that after allowing for the superior dignity of the office of a transcriber in the age of Theodosius, compared with its diminished importance at the present day, there is something more implied in the verses of Probus than that he was merely a copyist, and he must either have had a part in the composition, or, having discovered the MS., was not unwilling that he should have some share of the credit due to the author.

The *Vitæ Imperatorum*, properly so called, contain the lives of nineteen Greek, one Persian, and two Carthaginian generals. It has been conjectured, that there was also a series of lives of Roman commanders, but that these had perished before Æmilius Probus commenced his transcription. That Nepos at least intended to write these biographies, appears from a passage at the end of the life of Hannibal, in

<sup>1</sup> *De Histor. Lat. Lib. I. c. 14.*

<sup>2</sup> *De Viril. Ætat. Ling. Lat. Pars II. c. iv. § 38.*



which he says, "it is now time to conclude this book, and proceed to the lives of the Roman generals, that their exploits being compared with those of the Greeks, it may be judged which are to be preferred."<sup>1</sup> That he actually accomplished this task is rendered at least probable, from the circumstance of Plutarch quoting the authority of Nepos, for facts concerning the lives of Marcellus and Lucullus; and it seems not unlikely, that the sentence at the close of *Hannibal*, may have suggested to that biographer the idea of his parallel lives.

The principles which Nepos displays in that part of the work which still remains, are those of an admirer of virtue, a foe to vice, and a supporter of the cause of freedom. It was written in the crisis of his country's fate, and during her last struggles for liberty, when despotism was impending; but the hope of freedom was not yet extinguished in the breasts of the last of the Romans. The work, it has been conjectured,<sup>2</sup> was undertaken to fan the expiring flame, by exhibiting the example of such men as Dion, and Timoleon, and by inserting sentiments which were appropriate to the times. In choosing the subjects of his biographies, the author chiefly selects those heroes who had maintained or recovered the liberties of their country, and he passes over all that bears no reference to this favourite theme. It must be confessed, how-

<sup>1</sup> Sed nunc tempus est hujus libri facere finem, et Romanorum explicare imperatores—quo facilius, collatis utrorumque factis, qui viri præferendi sint, possit judicari.—c. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Harles, *Introduct. in Lit. Rom.* T. I. p. 367.

ever, that he does not display in a very enviable view the fate of those popular chiefs, who defended or liberated their native land. The "Invidia, gloriæ comes," lighted on almost every Grecian hero; and Miltiades and Themistocles ultimately received no better reward from the free Athenian citizens than Datames obtained from the Persian despot.

With regard to the authenticity of his facts, Nepos has given us no information in his preface concerning the sources to which he resorted; but, in the course of his biographies, he cites Thucydides, Xenophon, Theopompus, and Philistus, and also Dinon, to whose authority he chiefly trusted with regard to Persian affairs.<sup>1</sup> That he compared the different opinions of these historians on the same subject is evinced by a passage in his *Alcibiades*;<sup>2</sup> and it appears, from another passage in his life of Themistocles, that when they differed in their statements of facts, he had the good sense and judgment to prefer the authority of Thucydides.<sup>3</sup> Aulus Gellius rather commends his diligence in the investigation of facts.<sup>4</sup> But Pliny, on the other hand, censures both his credulity and

<sup>1</sup> Contra ea Dinon historicus, cui nos plurimum de Persicis rebus credimus.—*Vit. Conon.* c. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Hunc, infamatum a plerisque, tres gravissimi historici summis laudibus extulerunt: Thucydides qui ejusdem ætatis fuit; Theopompus qui fuit post aliquanto natus; et Timæus.—c. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Scio plerosque ita scripsisse, Themistoclem, Xerxe regnante, in Asiam transisse. Sed ego potissimum Thucydidi credo, quod ætate proximus erat, et ejusdem civitatis fuit.—c. 9.

<sup>4</sup> C. Nepos rerum memoriæ non indiligens.—*Noct. Att. Lib. XV.* c. 28.

haste;<sup>1</sup> and the investigation of modern commentators has discovered many mistakes and inconsistencies in almost every one of his biographies. For example, it was not the great Miltiades, son of Cimon, as Nepos erroneously relates, who led a Greek colony to the Chersonesus, and there founded a petty sovereignty, but Miltiades, the son of Cypselus, as the Latin biographer might have learned from Herodotus,<sup>2</sup> an author whom he never quotes, and scarcely appears to have consulted. In the life of Cimon,<sup>3</sup> he confounds the battle of Mycale, gained by Xantippus, with the victory which Cimon nine years afterwards obtained over Eurymedon. On comparing the second and third chapters of the life of Pausanias with the recital of Thucydides,<sup>4</sup> it will be seen, that he has completely deranged the order of time and events. There is a similar confusion in the third chapter of his *Lysander*, and in the account given in *Dion*<sup>5</sup> of the different voyages of Plato to Syracuse. He asserts, in the life of Conon,<sup>6</sup> that that general was not present at the battle of Ægospotamos, contrary to the testimony of Xenophon;<sup>7</sup> and in Hannibal he affirms,<sup>8</sup> in opposition to all authority, that the Carthaginian marched to Rome immediately after the battle of Cannæ.<sup>9</sup> Nepos is also charged with

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Nat. Lib. V. c. 1.*

<sup>2</sup> *Lib. VI. 34.*

<sup>3</sup> *Cap. 3.*

<sup>4</sup> *I. 130. 134.*

<sup>5</sup> *Cap. 2.*

<sup>6</sup> *Cap. 1.*

<sup>7</sup> *Hellen. II. 1.*

<sup>8</sup> *Cap. 5.*

<sup>9</sup> Tzschucke, *Comment. perpet. in C. Nep. Vitas Conscrip. Götting. 1804.* Schœll, *Hist. de la Littér. Rom. T. II. p. 18.*



being too much of a panegyrist, and having given to his *Lives* the air rather of a series of professed eulogies than of discriminating and impartial biographies. "Candidus," says Erasmus, "est laudator omnium, quorum vita descripsit, ut encomiasten dicas veriùs quàm historiographum." In fact, however, he selected the lives of those whom he considered as most worthy of admiration; and he has not failed to bestow due reprobation on the few who, like Pausanias and Lysander, degenerated from the virtues of their countrymen.

Nepos appears to have been fully aware of the difference between history and biography; remembering that the latter was more simple than the former—that it did not require to be so full with regard to public events, and admitted more details of private life and manners. To this distinction he alludes in his preface; and we accordingly find, that the life of Epaminondas, for example, is occupied with the private character, and memorable sayings, more than with the patriotic exploits, of that renowned hero. He has thus recorded a great many curious particulars which are not elsewhere to be found; and he excels in that art (the difficulty of which renders good abridgements so rare) of perceiving the features which are most characteristic, and painting vividly with a few touches. "The character of Alcibiades," says Gibbon, "is such that Livy need not have been ashamed of it."<sup>1</sup>

The MS. of Æmilius Probus, the copies taken

<sup>1</sup> *Miscellaneous Works*, IV. p. 417.

from it, and the *Editio Princeps* published by Jenson in 1471, all terminated with the life of Hannibal. The fragment of the life of Cato the Censor, and the life of Pomponius Atticus, now generally appended to the *Vitæ Excellentium Imperatorum*, were discovered by Cornerus, in an old MS., containing the letters of Cicero to Atticus, and were published by him along with the *Vitæ Imperatorum*, in an edition which is without date, but is generally accounted the second of that production of Nepos. It is evident that the life of Atticus was a separate work, or an extract of a work, which was altogether different from the *Vitæ Imperatorum*;<sup>1</sup> for, in the first place, Atticus was not a military commander; and, secondly, Nepos dedicates the *Vitæ Imperatorum* to Atticus, while, in the last chapters of the life of Atticus, he minutely relates the circumstances of his death. The old scholiasts are of opinion, that, along with the fragment on the life of Cato the Censor, it had originally formed part of a treatise by Cornelius Nepos which is now lost, and which was entitled, *De Historicis Latinis*.

The life of Atticus is much more curious and valuable than the biographies of the Greek generals. It is fuller, and it is not drawn, as they are, from secondary sources. Nepos was the intimate friend of Atticus, and was himself an eye-witness of all he relates concerning the daily occurrences of his life, and with regard to the most minute particulars of his domestic

<sup>1</sup> Fuhrmann, *Handbuch der Classischen Literat.* T. IV. p. 608.

arrangements, even down to his household expenses. As exhibiting the fullest details of the private life of a Roman, (though a specimen no doubt highly favourable and ornamental,) it is perhaps the most interesting piece of biography which has descended to us from antiquity.<sup>1</sup>

Nepos appears to have been a very fertile writer. Besides the lives of commanders and that of Pomponius Atticus, he was the author of several works, chiefly of a historical description, which are now almost entirely lost. He wrote, in three books, an abridgement of the history of the world; and he had the merit of being the first author among the Romans who completed a task of this laborious and useful description.<sup>2</sup> Aulus Gellius mentions his life of Cicero,<sup>3</sup> and quotes the fifth book of his work, entitled *Exemplorum Libri*.<sup>4</sup> He also composed a treatise on the difference of the terms *litteratus* and *eruditus*; and, finally, a book *De Historicis Græcis*, as we learn from a passage in his life of Dion—"Sed de hoc in meo libro plura sunt exposita, qui de Historicis Græcis conscriptus est."

While so many productions of Nepos have been lost,

<sup>1</sup> The Abbé St Real, in his *Cæsarion*, (Jour. 3. Œuvres, T. II.) has passed some severe strictures on the artificial and compromising character of Atticus, and on the bad faith of Cornelius Nepos, in presenting the world with too favourable a likeness of his friend.

<sup>2</sup> — Ausus es unus Italorum

Omne ævum tribus explicare chartis,

Doctis, Jupiter! et laboriosis.

Catull. I.

<sup>3</sup> Noct. Att. XV. 28.

<sup>4</sup> Id. Lib. VII. 18.



and it has been denied that he was the author of some which he actually composed, others, by a strange caprice, have been attributed to him which he certainly did not write. One of these is the work *De Viris Illustribus*, now generally assigned to Aurelius Victor. Another is the book *De Excidio Trojæ*, which professes to be a Latin translation, by Cornelius Nepos, from a Greek work of Dares Phrygius, though in fact it was written by an obscure author posterior to the age of Constantine. Along with the book which passed under the name of Dictys Cretensis, it became the origin of those folios of romance and chivalry, in which the heroes of Greece were marshalled with Arthur's Round Table knights, and with the Paladins of Charlemagne.

The art of narrative, the structure of sentences, the delineation of character, and other graces of historic and biographical composition, had attained their highest excellence in the Augustan age. But the study of antiquities had made little progress, and the science of historical criticism was still imperfect. While other branches of art and literature declined after the death of Livy, the spirit of investigation and philosophic deduction improved, and was at length fully unfolded in the page of Tacitus, who applied the science of philosophy to the study of facts.

Eloquence, which we have seen carried to its utmost height, amid the last struggles for liberty at Rome, declined during the Augustan age, when every

othe art and accomplishment attained their greatest perfection. For this decay it is not difficult to account. In former times, the frequent assemblies of the people—the privilege of arraigning the most considerable members of the state, and the popularity of such impeachments, contributed to raise the genius, and inspire the eloquence of the ancient orator. The popular factions and commotions which prevailed from the time of Gracchus to that of Cicero, with the topics of discussion which such periods supplied—the oppression of allies, the treasons and conspiracies of citizens, all acted as incentives to eloquence. Oratory rises and expands in proportion to the dignity of the occasion on which it is exerted. The speech of Demosthenes against his guardians, scarcely established his reputation, nor did the defence of Quinctius obtain for Cicero the character of a consummate orator: It was the oppressions of Verres, and treason of Catiline, which gave the finishing brightness to his fame. The concourse, too, of people, and the retinue of clients who thronged the Forum on those solemn trials, in the issue of which all Rome was interested, bestowed additional force on eloquence, which ever exults in a full audience, and rejoices in the clamour of applause. In the times of the republic, likewise, the arts of oratory opened the most direct road to preferments or honours in the state, and it naturally flourished so long as it conducted to greatness, by enabling the speaker to direct the deliberations of his countrymen.

All this was changed in the reign of Augustus, when affairs were no longer determined by the voice

of an ignorant and giddy multitude, but by the wisdom of a single chief. A Verres or a Catiline could no longer run his audacious career. Uninterrupted peace abroad, and perfect tranquillity at home, with the steady government of a prince, damped the flames of eloquence as well as those of sedition.<sup>1</sup> General assemblies of the people were no longer held, and even the senate, where a show of deliberation and discussion was still preserved, while it had increased in numbers, had lost its dignity. The first families of Rome had fallen in the wars or proscriptions, and their places had been filled with foreigners and freedmen. Of all the improvements of Augustus, that which he effected in the administration of justice was the most beneficial. Pathos, and the arts of rhetoric, had in consequence less influence than formerly. Causes now depended on documents, and the examination of witnesses, and not on a prepossessing exordium or forcible peroration. Augustus, while he appeared to leave with the people the free choice of their magistrates, deprived them of the power of enacting laws, and judging in cases concerning public delinquencies. But even the right of electing magistrates was but nominal, and hence the chief motive which actuated patrons in the gratuitous exertion of their oratorical talents ceased. The practice of the law became mercenary, and was followed only as a profession for gain.

<sup>1</sup> Longa temporum quies, et continuum populi otium, et assidua senatûs tranquillitas, et maximi principis disciplina, ipsam quoque eloquentiam, sicut omnia alia, pacaverat.—*De Causis Corrupt. Eloquent.*



The emperor pointed out every candidate who was to succeed in the pretended elections. The offices of prætor and ædile, and even the once supreme dignity of consul, after being occupied for a few days, were transferred to others, in order to bestow an empty title or precedency. They gave no claim as in the former days of the republic to the government of provinces—they bestowed no influence, and during their short continuance, scarcely implied any function in the city. Hence, the titles of magistracy once so coveted, and chiefly acquired by the exertions of eloquence, were at length shunned as contemptible, or as a badge of conspicuous servitude. Those who in earlier days might, like Gracchus, have burned in the Forum, now, listless and desponding, addicted themselves to such gratifications as they were capable of enjoying, without acquiring a dangerous popularity, or exciting suspicion in a despot. The memory of Gracchus and of Cicero, which in bolder times might have animated the exertions of eloquence, must have deadened its powers in a free and generous spirit, which felt that the field was excluded wherein its noblest triumphs had been displayed, and that the highest glory a Roman could now attain, was to mitigate a despotism. Whoever compares the orations of Cicero for Deiotarus, Marcellus, and Ligarius, with his preceding harangues, must perceive the withering influence of servitude even on his powers; and what must have been its effect on an inferior mind, and during a more confirmed tyranny?

These changes in the government, and in the ad-

ministration of justice, sufficiently explain why the number of orators was fewer, and the flights of eloquence less lofty, than in the days of the republic, but they seem scarcely adequate to account for that depravation of taste which infected the oratory of a period that produced the most perfect specimens in poetry and history. The genuine tone, however, of eloquence is that of freedom. When the language of liberty is curbed, that of eloquence is restrained also; and when its free utterance is checked, its thoughts and language diverge from their genuine purpose, though the style of poetry, and even of history, may remain uncorrupted. It will be remarked, besides, that eloquence had reached its height in the age of Cicero and Hortensius; and there seems to be a law in the intellectual world, that nothing continues long in perfection. "Oratorum quidem laus ita," says Cicero, towards the close of his existence, as if inspired by a prophetic spirit, "oratorum quidem laus ita, ducta ab humili, venit ad summum, ut jam, quod natura fert in omnibus fere rebus, senescat, brevique tempore ad nihilum ventura videatur."<sup>1</sup> In fact, when, in any department of literature, perfection has been attained, (by which I mean as high a degree of excellence as a favourable combination of circumstances, united with the highest intellectual powers, can bestow,) the struggles of inferior minds to surpass what can hardly be equalled, distort the forms of grace and beauty into shapes incongruous or fantastic. It

<sup>1</sup> *Tuscul. Disput. Lib. II. c. 2.*

is then that authors attempt to write, and orators strive to speak, better than they can. They render what was sublime—bombast, and convert what was brilliant into tinsel; or they sometimes force themselves to return to the rude state in which the art of composition existed, before it had received the last touches of time and genius. The first epic that appeared after the *Æneid*, was the inflated poem of Lucan; and in modern Italy, the *Adonis* of Marino succeeded the *Jerusalem* of Tasso. Hence it may be doubted, even had Rome preserved its freedom, if a period would ever have returned when a Cicero, Hortensius, and Cæsar, might have been heard on the same day in the Forum.

The schools of declamation also tended to corrupt and vitiate the taste of the young orator. Such schools no doubt existed in the age of Cicero, but attendance on them formed only a part of education. The youth destined for an oratorical profession, was, in those days, early intrusted to some eminent jurisconsult or popular pleader, whom he followed to the Forum. He was thus, when abroad, qualified for debate, amid scenes of real forensic duties, while at home he devoted his time to the acquisition of those sciences and accomplishments, which were considered as essential to complete the character of an orator. But such useful and practical preparations began to be neglected in the age of Augustus, when the education of youth was almost solely committed to rhetoricians. The *Suasoriæ* and *Controversiæ* which were declaimed and debated in the school of the rhetorical teacher,



had little affinity to real pleading, and no reference to existing laws or actual occurrences, but hinged on imaginary and fantastical questions, in which antithesis, pompous diction, and sonorous expressions, were more sought after than convincing arguments. An idea of these scholastic disputations, and of the style of oratory which they fostered, may be formed from the *Suasoriæ* and *Controversiæ* of Seneca the rhetorician, who wrote in the reign of Tiberius, and died in that of Caligula, but had attended the schools of declamation in the age of Augustus. Of these *Suasoriæ*, the subjects are, Whether Alexander, having overrun India, should have navigated the sea in search of farther conquests?—whether Cicero should have begged his life of Antony?—whether the 300 Spartans, who guarded the pass of Thermopylæ, ought to have retreated on being deserted by the other Greeks? and such like topics of discussion. The *Controversiæ*, or declamations of the judicial kind, turn on the application of some law to a case for which it had not precisely provided, or the occurrence of some circumstance which made its application impracticable. The arguments used in these mock trials, and even the language in which they are clothed, are not those of Seneca himself, but what he remembered to have heard in the schools, or read in the books of declamations. The introductions, and a few scattered opinions only, are his own. Hence, the *Suasoriæ* and *Controversiæ* convey to us an excellent idea of the declamatory exercises of the Augustan age, and the eloquence of such teachers as Porcius Latro, Gallio, and Arellius

**Fuscus.** A fondness for what is new, striking, and ingenious, is constantly exhibited. The style is cut into short artificial sentences, adorned with figures of antithesis and tropes to please the fancy and soothe the ear.<sup>1</sup>

Petronius Arbiter, and the author of the dialogue *De Causis Corruptæ Eloquentiæ*, both consider the schools of declamation as the principal cause of the decline of eloquence among the Romans, which the latter proves by contrasting the method of institution pursued in them with the ancient course of study. Even Seneca himself, has given nearly the same judgment in the character of Montanus Votienus, a famous orator of those times, who, being asked why he did not practise declamation, replies, That declaimers speak not to gain a cause as pleaders, but to please their hearers; therefore, they omit what is necessary and useful in the case, and study only the topics which are susceptible of ornament. Then, they are not accustomed to answer arguments and objections made by real adversaries, but merely such as they create themselves, and which are advanced with a view to be controverted. Besides, they are supported in this exercise by frequent applause, during which they have time to assist the memory by recollection. The countenances, likewise, of all their hearers at such exhibitions, are familiar to them, and they are never disagreeably interrupted. For these reasons, when they venture into

<sup>1</sup> Mellitos verborum globulos, et omnia dicta, factaque, quasi pavere et sesamo sparsa. Petron. Arbiter, *Satyræ*. c. 1.

the Forum to plead real causes, they seem transported into another world, where they are unable to bear the eyes of men whom they do not know, or the noise and tumult of a multitude.<sup>1</sup>

The style of oratory, however, to which these declamations gave birth, chiefly prevailed towards the end of the reign of Augustus. Its earlier years were distinguished by a few orators, who had been bred under the ancient system, who had received lessons from Cicero himself towards the close of his career,<sup>2</sup> and who yet retained a share of that more practical spirit, which marked the eloquence of a better age. Among these, one of the most eminent was Asinius Pollio, who has been already mentioned as a historian and zealous patron of literature. When only twenty-one years of age, and when Cicero was at the height of his reputation, Pollio commenced his oratorical career, by the impeachment of Caius Cato, a turbulent tribune, and he prosecuted the accusation with such spirit and eloquence, that the speeches he delivered in this trial were read with much admiration by posterity.<sup>3</sup> He continued to plead causes, and occasionally to give his opinion in the senate, during the reign of Augustus.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See also Petronius Arbiter, *Satyr.* c. 1. Nunc et rerum tumore, et sententiarum vanissimo strepitu, hoc tantum proficiunt, ut, quum in forum venerint, putent se in alium terrarum orbem delatos.

<sup>2</sup> Pansam, Hirtium, Dolabellam in morem præceptoris exercuit, quotidie dicens, audiensque. Quintil. *Inst. Orat.* Lib. XII. c. 11.

<sup>3</sup> *De Caus. Corrupt. Eloquen.*

<sup>4</sup> Insigne mœstis præsidium reis,  
Et consulenti, Pollio, curiæ.

Horat. Lib. II. *Od.* 1.



C. Celsus, as quoted by Quintilian, mentions one of his orations as exhibiting the most perfect specimen of a happy exordium; and Quintilian himself refers to his speech for the heirs of Urbinia, as supplying a fine example of an orator venturing on the argument, that the personal character of the advocate who appeared on the opposite side, was a proof of a bad cause.<sup>1</sup> Quintilian attributes to him great invention, regularity of design, and spirit; but he was deficient in brilliancy, smoothness, and delicacy.<sup>2</sup>

Pollio, in his air and manner, as well as in his dry unpolished style, affected to imitate the ancient orators, so that one might have supposed him a contemporary of Menenius Agrippa.<sup>3</sup> Though he had a high opinion of his own powers, and was somewhat jealous of the merit of others, he was accustomed to say of himself, that by pleading at first with correctness, he had such success as made him be often employed; but by pleading frequently he began to lose the propriety of speech with which he commenced: and the reason he assigned was, that by constant practice he acquired rashness, not a just confidence in himself,—a flowing facility, and not the genuine faculty of an orator. Tiraboschi, though, I think, on insufficient grounds, attributes the corruption and decline of Roman eloquence chiefly to Pollio.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lib. IV. c. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. X. c. 1.

<sup>3</sup> *De Caus. Corrupt. Eloquen.*

<sup>4</sup> *Stor. Dell. Letterat. Ital.* Parte III. Lib. III. c. 2.

Messala was an orator of a totally different description from Pollio; he was deficient in force and vigour, but he displayed much grace, dignity, and polish, in all his discourses;<sup>1</sup> and an eminent critic has declared, that his language was more correct, and his periods more smooth and harmonious, than those of Tully himself. But the same writer<sup>2</sup> informs us, that every one of his harangues commenced with a tedious and uniform apology for the weakness of his constitution.

Messala, with those who still followed the principles of the ancient school of eloquence, continued to form their taste on Greek oratory; and Messala in particular nourished and improved his forensic talents by translating orations from the Greek,—among others, that for Phryne by Hyperides, in which he vies with his original even in delicacy, a quality so difficult to be retained in the Latin language.<sup>3</sup>

Hitherto the most distinguished orators, though circumstances repressed the fire of genius, preserved somewhat of the purity and simplicity which they owed to the tuition they had received in the days of the republic. Cassius Severus was the first who completely accommodated eloquence to the times, and the taste of the audience,—departing from the plain and simple manner which had till then prevailed, and striking into a new and more florid path opened up in the schools of declamation. The speaker, who, in the dialogue which I have so often quoted, supports the cause

<sup>1</sup> Quintil. *Inst. Orat.* Lib. X. c. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *De Caus. Corrupt. Eloquent.*

<sup>3</sup> Quintil. *Inst. Orat.* Lib. X. c. 5.

of ancient oratory, says, " that Severus was the first who neglected chastity of style and propriety of method. Inexpert in the use of those very weapons with which he engaged, he ever lays himself open to a thrust by always endeavouring to attack ; and one may much more properly say of him that he pushes at random, than that he comports himself according to the just rules of regular combat. Nevertheless, he is greatly superior, as I observed before, in the variety of his learning, the agreeableness of his wit, and the strength of his genius, to those who succeeded him." A contemporary critic says, he might have challenged a foremost rank in eloquence, had he added to his other properties dignity of style ; for his abilities were great, and his asperity wonderful. Cassius was a man of a violent temper, and an ungovernable tongue ; his resentments got the better of his judgment ; and his powers of ridicule were frequently exercised in jests, which were coarse and blunt.<sup>1</sup> He at length so far abused his talents and command of language, that he was banished with disgrace, on account of the defamatory libels he had promulgated : he aggravated the severity of his punishment under Tiberius, by giving vent, even in exile, to the bitterness of his feelings. Augustus had banished him to Crete in the year 759. Tiberius removed him still farther, by driving him to the desert isle of Seriphos, where he grew old, and died in the utmost misery, after twenty-five years of exile.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Plin. *Hist. Nat. Lib.* XXXV. c. 12. Quintil. *Inst. Orat. Lib.* X. c. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Tacit. *Annal. Lib.* IV. c. 21.



Having in a former volume concluded what I had to say of Cicero, there will be little occasion to resume the subject of Roman philosophy till I advance as far as the time of Seneca. In the Augustan age, the city of Rome had extended its empire over every nation in which human intelligence had risen above the weakness of its earliest infancy ; and it might in consequence be thought that the capital ought to have been the great depository of all the science and knowledge which then existed in the universe. We meet, however, with no Roman who illustrated philosophy by his writings, during the Augustan age. The Latin language was ill adapted for philosophical purposes. The Romans had been engaged for 700 years in wars and commotions, some foreign, and some domestic, which wholly engrossed their thoughts. Hence their language became, like their ideas, copious in all that related to the operations of war and politics, and well suited to the purposes of history or popular eloquence. But they had no precise terms for metaphysical ideas, nor a sufficient number of subjects for philosophic illustration. Cicero and Lucretius had felt this difficulty. They had struggled with it, but had not so far overcome it as to bequeath a philosophic language to the Augustan age. There were, besides, so many Greek schools of philosophy, that the Romans had little motive to invent new systems, since every one might find in the doctrines of some sect or other, tenets which could be sufficiently accommodated to his own disposition and situation. The autho-

rity of Plato, Zeno, and Epicurus, still reigned in the Academies and Lyceums of Greece. Athens, though stripped of her works of art, and deprived of her political constitution, had yet to boast her schools of philosophy. *There* was the Grove, in which Plato had unfolded his sublime mysteries; there were the shades and walks of the Gardens of Epicurus, where that teacher had explained the nature of things, and inculcated temperance; and there stood the Lyceum, in which the Stagyrte had anatomized the springs of the human intellect. The systems of these schools, being transmitted with blind deference from one generation of disciples to another, tended, perhaps, to repress any effort to exercise the mental powers, or enlarge the limits of the human understanding. Rome does not appear to have been possessed of any public establishment for a general course of philosophy, though it abounded in libraries and museums. The high-born youth of the capital still continued to frequent the schools of Athens, Rhodes, and Alexandria, in order to acquire the principles of rhetoric or philosophy in these their ancient and famed abodes. They studied different systems from curiosity or for amusement, and extracted from them some useful maxims for their conduct in public life,—some principles which fortified them against superstition,—some rules which enabled them to pass their days more free from anxiety and perturbation; and this was the point of view in which philosophy was regarded by Mæcenas, Virgil, and Horace. The Greek philosophers were likewise

encouraged and patronised at Rome. The respect which Augustus paid to these sages was a politic measure, and highly popular among his subjects. The character of the professors of wisdom was sacred; and their admission to the court and the councils of Augustus was received as a pledge or declaration that he would govern with justice and humanity. In his early youth, he brought with him to Rome, from Apollonia, Athenodorus, the Tarsian, under whom (though with no great practical benefit) he had studied morals in Greece. He was one of the wisest of men, and a Stoic, in the best sense of the term, being persuaded that virtue and happiness are inseparable, and ever regulating his life in conformity with that principle. The dignity and weight of his character secured to him the favour and confidence of his imperial pupil, in spite of the severe, and on some occasions practical reproofs, which he freely administered to him. Augustus had compelled a lady of some rank to give him an assignation. Athenodorus had often warned him of the danger he incurred by such intrigues, but his admonitions met with little attention. Having heard of this new intrigue, he secretly stepped into the litter which was destined to receive the fair, and was carried in her place with close-drawn curtains to the apartment of Cæsar. He then suddenly sprung out with a drawn sword in his hand, which he pointed at the throat of the emperor,—thus showing him the danger he incurred of perhaps introducing an assassin, in the person of a jealous husband, or incensed rela-



tive, into the interior of his palace. The lesson, being one rather of prudence than morals, is said not to have been thrown away.

Areius, the Platonist, was a man of equal worth and knowledge with Athenodorus, but he professed a milder philosophy, and one which was more adapted to the temper of the times. Though a native of Alexandria, he had escaped the moral contagion of that licentious town. When Egypt was subdued by Augustus, the conqueror entered Alexandria, holding Areius by the hand; and in the harangue which he delivered to the inhabitants from his tribunal, informed them that he spared their town partly for the sake of Areius, his own friend, and their fellow-citizen.<sup>1</sup> Yet, mild as was the temper and philosophy of this Platonist, he strongly urged Augustus to destroy Cæsario, the reputed son of Julius Cæsar and Cleopatra, fortifying his opinion by a line in Homer—

*Ὅν ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανὴν εἰς κοίρας ἔσω—*<sup>2</sup>

which Areius thus converted,

*Ὅν ἀγαθὸν πολυκαίσαρην, εἰς Καίσαρος ἔσω.*

When Augustus returned from Egypt, Areius followed him to Rome. The empress Livia, in the commencement of her grief for the loss of her son Drusus, admitted him as a visitor, and acknowledged that

<sup>1</sup> Dio Cassius, Lib. 51.

<sup>2</sup> *Iliad*, Lib. II. v. 204.

her sorrows were much assuaged by the topics of consolation which he suggested.<sup>1</sup> He was also patronised by Mæcenas, in whose house he frequently resided. Areius was the fellow-citizen of Bathyllus; and one should like to know how the Platonist and the Pantomime comported themselves towards each other in the palace of their mutual patron.

Montesquieu attributes to the prevalence of the Epicurean sect towards the close of the republic, the corruption of the Roman heart, and understanding;<sup>2</sup> but after the monarchy was firmly established, it would appear, that the Stoical system found the greatest number of votaries amongst those who made profession of philosophy. When the high situations of the state were withheld, when wealth, and even life, became precarious, many sought their support and consolation in the school of Zeno, and returned to the idea, that men were rendered happy by the qualities they themselves possessed, and not by the mere gifts of fortune:—And although no opportunity was afforded them of realising their own ideas in distinguished situations, they gave, as we shall hereafter find, sufficient evidence of their sincerity, by the manly indifference with which they incurred the consequences of their independence, and the stern resolution with which they met the last blow of the tyrant.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Seneca, *Consolatio ad Marciam*, c. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Grandeur, &c. des Romains*, c. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Ferguson's *Roman Republic*, c. 42.

I SHALL here conclude the History of Roman Literature during the Reign of Augustus, which is universally allowed to have been its brightest period. From the settlement of colonies, and communication of the privilege of citizenship, the Latin language was now more widely spread than in any preceding age. Amid all the encouragements which the Romans extended to the literature of Greece, and amid all their imitations of its poetry, they did not fail to vindicate the dignity of their own language, and were always most anxious for its extension and sovereignty. For many ages, indeed, and while it was merely a spoken language, it had been extremely fluctuating and variable; but before the Augustan age it had received stability from literary composition: and from the wonderful care which was taken by the great men towards the close of the republic, as Cæsar, Varro, Cicero, and Pompey,<sup>1</sup> to preserve its purity, it had now reached the highest pitch of refinement. The standard of perfection was fixed—every ancient barbarism was dropped, and every innovation shunned.

Hence, the Latin authors of the Augustan age, are possessed of one excellence not to be found in an equal degree among the writers of any other country, nor among those of their own, by whom they were preceded or followed;—an exquisite skill in the use of language, a happy selection of words, a beautiful

<sup>1</sup> Funccius, *De Viril. Ætat. Lat. Ling.* c. 1.



structure of periods, and a precision of style, which conveys their sentiments by the straightest paths, whether to the heart or understanding. Other writers may have soared with higher flight, and excited in their readers greater admiration or wonder—they may have ventured more fearlessly into unexplored regions, and trode more boldly the brink of error. But it is the peculiar merit of the Augustan authors, that they scarcely ever present us with a loose expression, or superfluous clause; and that they always convey their meaning in the choicest and most appropriate terms. Hence, their lines fix themselves and dwell on the memory, and their sentences have all the force of maxims.

From the charm cast over it by a few men of exalted genius, the Augustan age has been regarded not only as happy in the purity of language, but as affording an example of every sort of national felicity, as the flourishing period of the Roman state—the second Golden Age announced by oracles and poets—the “Cumæi carminis ætas!”

And happy perhaps it was, when compared with the times by which it was immediately preceded and followed. In the period which elapsed from the death of Augustus, till the transference of the seat of empire from Italy, the literature of Rome is the only part of its story on which we can dwell with continued satisfaction. Revolution in the civil government affected the literature of Rome, as it had influenced that of Greece; but the genius of Rome languished

longer before it expired. The bright intervals in the political horizon, during the golden sway of Trajan, or the Antonines, were brief and transitory ; but it was long ere the breath of the tyrant “ quenched the orb of day.” The genius of Seneca and Lucan illuminated the dark reign of Nero ; and Juvenal, Martial, and Statius, flourished under the despotism of Domitian.



*Drawn by J. B. Kidd*

*Engd by W. H. Lizars*

TENET NUNC PARTHENOPE.

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## APPENDIX.

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## APPENDIX.

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WE have seen, in the commencement of the Appendix to the preceding volumes, that, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, mankind were suddenly seized with the desire of rescuing the classics, when on the verge of being utterly lost and destroyed, from the oblivion into which they had fallen. Scholars travelled without intermission, drawn from country to country by the faintest hope of discovering a classical MS. Kings and princes considered their recovery as the most important task in which they could be engaged, and the success of their search afforded a more envied triumph than the sack of cities, or the defeat of armies : And when we remember the benefits that have resulted from this literary ardour, we can scarcely consider their zeal as extravagant or enthusiastic.

In the former Appendix, I had given some account of the discovery, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, of those classics who wrote during the period from the first dawn of literature at Rome, till the termination of the commonwealth. The works of the Latin writers who flourished in the time of the republic, had been lost during the Dark Ages ; or, at least, were so little known and so obscure, that the scholars who brought a MS. of Plautus or of Cicero to light, from the recesses of a German or Italian cloister, were hailed as its discoverers. The productions of many minor poets of the Augustan age have irretrievably perished, but the compositions of its more illustrious authors were not only preserved during the Middle Ages, but they were so much read, and the copies of



them were so numerous, that there is no history to give concerning the recovery of the works of Virgil, Horace, and Ovid.

It was, indeed, naturally to be expected, that the MSS. of the Augustan age should have been better preserved than those of a preceding time, since, in the reign of Augustus, public libraries first began to be established at Rome, and the works of all the great authors were thus laid up, as it were, at least for some time, in safe repositories. In consequence, too, of the more general diffusion of literature, copies were greatly multiplied during that period. In the age of Scipio, perhaps not ten persons in Rome would read the works of Ennius, but thousands waited with eager expectation for the first appearance of the *Æneid* of Virgil. Hence, while Poggio, Ambrosio Traversari, and other restorers of learning in the fifteenth century, congratulate themselves on bringing to light Plautus, Lucretius, and all the great poets of the republic, not a word is said by them with regard to a discovery of Horace or Virgil.

#### VIRGIL.

The works of this poet early became a subject of commentary and illustration. Julius Hyginus, who was a freedman of Augustus, and a friend of Ovid, corrected the common reading of a line in the *Georgics*, by an emendation taken from a copy belonging to Virgil's family. The usual reading ran thus—

At sapor indicium faciet manifestus, et ora  
Tristia tentantum sensu torquebit *amaro*.

This last word Hyginus changed into *amaror*, an alteration, which, as Gellius informs us,<sup>1</sup> was applauded by other learned men, and has been universally adopted in the printed editions; but while he approves of this correction, Gellius frequently refutes the verbal criticisms which Hyginus had made on Virgil, in his commentaries.

<sup>1</sup> *Noct. Attic. Lib. I. c. 21.*

He also refers to the commentaries of Cornutus, the friend of Persius, and other grammarians, his contemporaries, who had censured Virgil for the use of some words which they considered as unsuitable and inelegant, particularly the feeble expression of *illaudati*, as applied to the human sacrifices by Busiris<sup>1</sup>—

Quis illaudati nescit Busiridis aras ?

Macrobius, in his *Saturnalia*, complains that the grammarians previous to his time had merely passed verbal criticisms on Virgil, but had never afforded any elucidation of his sense or meaning. That sort of criticism, however, which consists in the exhibition of parallel passages, and in pointing out the imitations of the author, had likewise commenced ; for Aulus Gellius again mentions having heard from the scholars of Valerius Probus, who lived in the time of Nero, that their master was wont to say that Virgil had in no instance imitated Homer with less success than in the verses where the Greek poet describes Nausicaa.<sup>2</sup> Favorinus, the philosopher, who is also introduced discoursing in the *Attic Nights*, compares Virgil's description of Mount Ætna with that of Pindar, and decidedly gives the preference to the Theban bard.<sup>3</sup> Macrobius himself was also a great master in this department of criticism. In the sixth book of his *Saturnalia*, he has pointed out, by confronting the lines, those passages which Virgil has imitated from Homer, and from the ancient poets of his own country.

The productions of Virgil continued to be well known after the decline of Roman literature, and the inroads of the barbarians on the western provinces. Servius, whose commentary on Virgil is the most ancient now extant, wrote in the fourth century. St Augustine, who was nearly contemporary with him, confesses, that in his youth he had sinfully and idly wept over the woes of Dido.<sup>4</sup> The works of Jornandes show, that the libraries of the Goths in Italy, during the sixth century, comprehended all the writings of Virgil, and the manners of some of the Gothic kings are said to have been softened by their perusal. The library of Cassiodorus, at Monte Cassino, also contained the *Æneid*. Isidore of Seville familiarly

<sup>1</sup> *Noct. Att. Lib. II. 6.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid. IX. 9.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid. XVII. 10.*

<sup>4</sup> *Confess. Lib. I. c. 13 and 14.*

quotes Virgil in his book on *Etymologies*.<sup>1</sup> Anspert, Bishop of Benevento, avowed, in the eighth century, that he had never studied the works of Virgil, which implies that they were extant and accessible to perusal. Lupus, Abbot of Ferrieres, in the Orleannois, who was the most eager enquirer of his age after classical MSS., while in his letters he implores his friends to procure for him different parts of Cicero, and the older classics, appears to have had Virgil constantly at hand. He is also quoted by Vincent de Beauvais, (the author of the *Speculum Historiale*,) in the letter of consolation which he addressed to St Louis on the death of his son; and immediately before the invention of printing, Pontanus defended Virgil from the criticisms in Aulus Gellius, delivered under the name of the philosopher Favorinus.<sup>2</sup>

Of no other classic were there so many MSS. extant during the Middle Ages as of Virgil. At the revival of literature, the chief collectors and possessors of these MSS. seem to have been Pierius Valerianus, Cardinal Bembo, and Fulvius Ursinus. Four MSS. of Virgil deserve particular notice, on account of their antiquity, their authority, and the eminence of the persons by whom they were possessed.

1st.—This MS. which is supposed to be the most ancient, and generally believed to have been written in the fifth century, contains the last two books of the *Georgics* and the whole *Æneid*. In the fifteenth century it was in the possession of the celebrated modern Latin poet, Jovianus Pontanus. It passed from him to Cardinal Bembo, and then to Fulvius Ursinus, who presented it to the Vatican library, of which he had the principal charge. The MS. was adorned with some pictures, which have been engraved by Bartoli; and a fac-simile of it has been printed by Bottari, under the title, “*Antiquissimi Virgiliani Codicis fragmenta, et Picturæ ex Bibliothecâ Vaticanâ, ad priscas imaginum formas, a Petro Sancto Bartholi incisæ. Romæ, 1741.*”

2d.—Another MS. of equal antiquity, and which comprised the whole works of Virgil, also belonged to the Vatican library. It came originally from France to Italy, and after having been con-

<sup>1</sup> *Origines*, Lib. I. c. 35.

<sup>2</sup> Petit-Radel, *Récherches sur les Bibliothèques Anciennes*.



cealed for some time in a monastery, it was transferred to the Vatican. It is much praised by Politian, and is generally mentioned by commentators under the name of the *Codex Romanus*. In almost all the early editions of Virgil, the readings either of this Roman Codex, or those of the Medicean MS., from which it differs considerably, were adopted; whence these two MSS. formed two families or classes, to which most of the editions of Virgil may be referred—having been either immediately formed on them or on more modern MSS. transcribed from them.

3d.—The Florentine MS. which is also called the Medicean, from being preserved in the Medicean-Laurentian library at Florence, is the most celebrated and authoritative of all the MSS. of Virgil. It originally belonged to a person of the name of Macharius, and is at least as old as the fifth century; for the reviser of the MS., Turcius Rufius Apronianus Asterius, who names himself at the end of the *Bucolics*, was Consul of Rome in the year 494, when Theodoric reigned in Italy. He was the friend of Macharius the proprietor, and at his request undertook its emendation. He calls himself indeed his brother, but Bandini supposes that term to be merely one of affection—"Legi et distinxi codicem fratris Macharii, cui si, et ad omnia sum devotus arbitrio—

Distinxi emendans gratum mihi munus amici

Suscipiens, operi sedulus incubui.

Tempore quo penaces circo subjunximus, atque

Scenam Euripo extulimus subitam."<sup>1</sup>

The next person who is known to have possessed this MS. was Rodolphus Pius, a cardinal in the time of Paul III., who was pope about the middle of the 16th century. He lent it, during his life, to the commentator Achilles Statius, and, according to the younger Aldus Manutius, bequeathed it at his death, in 1564, to the Vatican library. It is not precisely known at what time or in what manner it passed from the Vatican to the Laurentian library at Florence; and Manutius hints that it had been surreptitiously conveyed from Rome to Florence. Bandini, however, who was the keeper of the Laurentian library, denies that it was ever in the Vatican, and asserts that it was purchased at an immense price by Cosmo I. Duke

<sup>1</sup> Burman, *Anth. T. I.* p. 371.

of Tuscany, from the heirs of Rodolphus Pius—in proof of which he quotes a letter from the Duke to Cardinal Monti, dated 1567, where he requests that Cardinal to procure for him the MS. of Virgil, which he heard had been left in the library of Rodolphus.<sup>1</sup> It is very probable, however, that Cosmo and his correspondent may have been disappointed, and that the MS. may have passed in the first instance to the Vatican.

This celebrated MS. wants the whole of the first five eclogues, commencing at the 48th line of the sixth. The remainder is in wonderful preservation, and is termed by Heinsius, who employed it in preparing his edition of Virgil, *Musarum Deliciæ et Parnassi Decus*. A fac-simile of it was published at Florence in 1741, by Foggini, who supplied, however, the five eclogues which are wanting, in a manner to correspond with the remainder of the MS. A second edition of this fac-simile was printed at Florence in 1763.

4th.—The last MS. I shall mention, is that which belonged to Petrarch, and was for many years his favourite companion. It is not so ancient as the other three, nor has it been so much used in the preparation of editions for the press. It has been chiefly celebrated for the notes which it contains, in the hand-writing of the Italian poet—one of which, written in the Latin language, on the first page of the MS., mentions the place and time of his first meeting with Laura, the year of her death, and the spot in which she was interred. When Petrarch's library was dispersed, this precious volume fell into the possession of his friend Giovanni Doni, a physician at Padua, who died in 1380. From his family, it came into the hands of Galeazzo Maria, fifth Duke of Milan, and was placed in the library of Pavia. After that city was taken by the French in 1499, the MS. became the property of Antonio Pirro. It then successively belonged to Antonio Agostino, and Fulvius Ursinus, at whose death, in the year 1600, it was purchased, at a very high price, by the Cardinal Frederico Borromeo, and placed by him in the Ambrosian library at Milan.

It does not appear that any one of these four MSS. was employed in the preparation of the *Editio Princeps* of Virgil, which was printed at Rome about the year 1469, by Sweynheim and Pan-

<sup>1</sup> Bandini, *Catalog. Bib. Med.-Laurent.* Tom. II. Plat. 39.

nartz. The Bishop of Aleria, who took charge of so many of the *Editiones Principes*, and also prepared this edition of Virgil for the press, complains, in a prefatory dedication to Pope Paul II., of the paucity, inaccuracy, and mutilation of the MSS. to which he had access, “*Quicquid*,” says he, “*Maronis scriptorum indepti sumus, quantum quidem fuimus intelligendo, in tantâ tamque mendosâ, exemplariorum raritate, multorumque ejusmodi prope desuetudine, immo vero inter necione, in corpus unum omne compegimus.*” The bishop, however, shortly afterwards undertook another edition, in which he corrected many of the errors of the first, having had the use of a valuable MS. belonging to Pomponius Lætus, to whom this work (usually called the *Editio Princeps Altera*) is addressed.

Nearly about the same time in which these editions appeared at Rome, under the superintendence of the Bishop of Aleria, a very beautiful impression was made at Venice by Vindelin de Spira. There is no classical author of whom so many early editions have been printed as of Virgil. Heyne mentions more than 50, and Panzer about 90, which appeared from the invention of printing till the close of the 15th century. These editions, (for the most part printed at Venice, Florence, and Milan,) are generally furnished with the commentaries of Servius, who lived in the reign of the Emperor Theodosius, and whose *Scholia* are a compilation from Cornutus, Probus, Hyginus, and other ancient critics on Virgil. Some annotations, however, by more modern writers even than Servius, were interpolated into his *Scholia*, and passed under his name at their first publication. These early impressions also usually comprehend the fragments of the commentary of Donatus which had been recently discovered, and the observations of Christoforo Landini, Philippus Beroaldus, Pomponius Lætus, and other scholars of that or the preceding age. Few of them, however, were edited with any great critical care or skill. Bernard and Peter Cenninus, who superintended and printed one of these editions at Florence in 1471, are the first editors or printers who are supposed to have employed the famous Medicean Codex above mentioned, for the emendation of the corrupted text; and the ancient Vatican MSS. were used for the Milan editions, by Zarotus in 1472, and 1474.

The typographical history of the editions of Virgil during the 16th century, commences with those of Aldus. The first of these



appeared in 1501, but the third, of 1514, which was edited under the care of that elegant scholar Navagero, is incomparably the best, though its readings have been less followed than those of the other Aldine Virgils. In the course of this century, the Junta published an edition at Florence in 1510, and Stephens at Paris in 1532, in which he first inserted the corrections and observations of Pierius Valerianus, who, of all the scholars of his age, had been the most assiduous collector of the MSS. of Virgil, and the most careful corrector of his text. Good editions were also published by George Fabricius, Camerarius, and Pulmannus. In 1529, a person of the name of Eobanus Hessus wrote annotations on the *Eclogues* and *Georgics* of Virgil, in which he translated into Latin, from Theocritus and Hesiod, all the passages which he supposed Virgil had imitated, and thus instituted a comparison of the Greek and Latin poets. This sort of criticism was pursued to a great length by Fulvius Ursinus, and La Cerda, and forms a considerable and curious part of the editions by the latter, printed in the beginning and middle of the 17th century.

The critical knowledge of Taubmann, and other contemporary scholars, was employed in the elucidation of the text of Virgil; but no complete or fully satisfactory edition appeared till that of Nicholas Heinsius, who devoted 30 years to the emendation of Virgil's text—collating an immense number of ancient MSS. and illustrating various passages with uncommon taste and erudition. His three editions, which appeared successively in 1664-71-76, (in which the Florentine MS. has been implicitly followed, for the orthography of the Latin words,) were printed at Amsterdam by the Elzevirs, and are accounted among the most beautiful specimens of typography which have issued from their celebrated press. In the year which succeeded the appearance of the first edition of Heinsius, the Delphin edition came forth under the care of the Jesuit Ruæus. That scholar certainly excelled all his fellow-labourers, who were appointed to explain and publish a series of the Roman classics for the use of the Dauphin. "Ea porro editio," says Fabricius, "facile optima est inter omnes editiones in usum Delphini factas." His mythological, historical, and geographical notes, exhibit his learning and diligence, but he has not entered into the spirit of his author, nor critically displayed the art and judgment of the poet.

The next edition which I shall mention, is that of Burman, who has chiefly taken Heinsius for his guide in the text. He did not live to see it go through the press, but it was brought out under the care of his nephew P. Burmannus Secundus. The contents of this work, first printed at Amsterdam, 1747, 4 Tom. are extremely voluminous and multifarious. A preface by the younger Burman—Donatus's life of Virgil, and two prefaces by Heinsius, are prefixed; it also contains the commentaries of Servius and Pierius, and the notes of Fulvius Ursinus, Tanaquil Faber, George Fabricius, and particularly of Nicholas Heinsius. The MSS., however, which Burman consulted, are of modern date, and of no great importance or authority. Heyne speaks rather slightly of this edition of Burman, but Harles gives a favourable account of it, and Ernesti has styled it "Omnium princeps, et canon Virgilii posthac luculenter edendi." This, I believe, was the estimation in which it was generally held, till the appearance of the celebrated editions of Heyne. These are too well known to the classical world to require from me any description. There were two editions printed at Leipsic, the one successively in separate volumes, in 1767-71-75, and the other in 1788, which greatly surpassed its predecessor. It was reprinted in London in 1793, in a very elegant and expensive manner. The last edition, however, which is that of Leipsic, 1800, is the most complete; but they all contain a rich fund of scholastic and critical information. A number of *excursuses* are also inserted, many of which are extremely interesting and entertaining. In the readings and orthography of the text, Heinsius, as we have seen, had implicitly followed the Florentine MS., but Heyne, placing less reliance on its antiquity, has frequently departed from it. It appears from the preface to his second Leipsic edition, that Heyne was much puzzled on this subject, and greatly at a loss when to adopt the more ancient and harsh orthography, or when he should employ that which was softer, and usually considered as more modern,—whether he should write *includere* or *illudere*, *volnus* or *vulnus*, *tris* or *tres*. There is a chapter in Aulus Gellius which might have convinced Heyne and all other editors, of the utter hopelessness of approaching, with any degree of certainty, to the orthography employed by the ancient Latin poets, since they themselves do not seem to have followed any fixed rule, or appear at least to have proceeded on prin-

ciples which cannot now be analyzed. "Valerius Probus was asked, as I heard from one of his acquaintances, whether it was right to say, *has urbis*, or *has urbes*,—*hanc turrem*, or *hanc turrim*?—'Whether,' replied he, 'you are writing verse or prose, pay no respect to the musty rules of grammarians, but consult your ear what suits the passage; and what the ear recommends will surely be the best.'—'How,' returned the inquirer, 'should I consult my ear?'—'In the same manner,' answered Probus, 'as Virgil did, who, in different places, has said, *urbes* and *urbis*, according to the taste and judgment of his ear; for in the first of his *Georgics*, which I have read, corrected by his own hand, he writes *urbis* with an *i*, as—

————— *Urbisne invisere, Caesar,*  
*Terrarumque velis curam :*

change it now to *urbes*, and you make it somehow more insipid and heavy. On the other hand, in the third *Æneid*, he has *urbes* with an *e*,—centum *urbes* habitant magnas; if you change this to *urbis*, the word becomes trifling and spiritless.' But I have since met," continues Gellius, "with instances of a word written by Virgil in two different ways, in the same passage, where he has used both *tris* and *tres* with that subtlety of judgment, that, should you change them, and substitute one for another, and have any ear, you must perceive that you injure the sweetness of the harmony. The lines are in his tenth book :

*Tres quoque Threicios Boreæ de gente supremâ,*  
*Et tris quos Idas pater et patria Ismara mittit.*

The use of *tres* in one place, and *tris* in the other, is employed in either case with such care and judgment, and such attention to rhythm, as to be most admirably adapted to each situation."<sup>1</sup> I perceive, however, that Heyne has not availed himself of this obvious hint, and that in his edition the word is printed *tris* in both verses. It also appears to me, that Heyne, however successful he may have been with the *Æneid*, *Georgics*, and *Eclogues*, has done but little for the illustration of the disputed works printed in the 4th volume.

<sup>1</sup> *Nost. Attic. Lib. XIII. c. 20.*



He has, indeed, given us enough of various readings, but many obscure passages and allusions are left entirely without elucidation.

During the time which elapsed from the appearance of Heyne's first edition, till the publication of the last, several very accurate and sumptuous editions of Virgil were brought out both in France and England, though none of them can contend with those of the German commentator in point of critical learning. To this class belong Didot's edition, published at Paris 1798, fol., and that which was formed on it, and was printed at London by Bensley in 1800, 2 vols. 8vo. In the former appendix, I had occasion to remark the many tasteless and injudicious readings adopted by Wakefield in his edition of Lucretius. His edition of Virgil (1796, London) is elegantly printed; but in his variations from the established text, it has been justly remarked by Harles, that "*multa temere sunt infeliciturque tentata.*"<sup>1</sup>

"In the comparison of Homer and Virgil," says Dr Johnson, in speaking of Translation,<sup>2</sup> "the discriminative excellence of Homer is elevation, and comprehension of thought, and that of Virgil is grace and splendour of diction. The beauties of Homer are therefore difficult to be lost, and those of Virgil difficult to be retained. The massy trunk of sentiment is safe by its solidity, but the blossoms of elocution easily drop away."

As was naturally to be expected, the first translations of Virgil appeared in Italy. Printing had not been long invented when the *Æneid* came out in Italian prose; first at Vicenza, in 1476, and afterwards at Venice, in 1478, the former bearing in the title the name of Athanasius, a Greek writer, as its author, and the latter that of Athenagoras. Both names are probably fictitious, and devised (as was not uncommon in that age) to give a stamp of greater authority and antiquity to these recent publications.

The earliest poetical version of the *Æneid* was in *Terza Rima*, and was first printed at Venice, in 1532. It was edited by a person called Giovan Paulo Vasio, who informs us in a prefatory address that he had amended it from the original translation, not very correctly

<sup>1</sup> *Supp. Not. Lit. Rom.* Tom. I. p. 376.

<sup>2</sup> *Lives of the Poets.* Dryden. Vol. II. p. 164.

executed, of Tomaso Cambiatore, who had lived in the middle of the preceding century. The friend to whom Vasio dedicated this work subsequently asked to see the original MS. of Cambiatore, and Vasio being unable, or not choosing, to exhibit it, his friend concluded that he was himself the sole author ; and, in consequence, after it had received some farther corrections, he published it under the name of Vasio at Venice, in 1538. This gave occasion to Crescimbeni and Apostolo Zeno to accuse Vasio of plagiarism, by alleging that he had appropriated the work which had been originally written by Cambiatore.

This translation was speedily followed by that of the Cavalier Corretani, in *Ottava Rima* (Florence, 1560) and by the version of the celebrated poet and critic Lodovico Dolce, which was completed by him a few days before his death, and published at Venice in 1568.

The translation by Annibal Caro, who adopted the *Versi Sciolti*, in preference to the *Ottava* or *Terza Rima*, is accounted the best that ever appeared of the Mantuan poet, and has perhaps been more universally celebrated than the translation of any classic whatever. It was published fifteen years after his death by one of his family, at Venice, in 1581, which edition was followed by about twelve others in the course of that and the succeeding century. These numerous editions are a sufficient proof of the high estimation in which it continued to be held. It has, indeed, been considered as somewhat too free, but excels almost every translation in force and spirit.

The great popularity of this version did not deter other Italian poets from attempting to render Virgil in their own language. The translations of Ercole Udine in *Ottava Rima*, (Venice, 1597,) and Theodore Angellucci in *Verso Sciolto*, (Naples, 1649,) though not equal to the work of Annibal Caro, are respectably executed. The last, in particular, is highly commended by the Italian critics, and is said by them to be less generally known than it deserves.<sup>1</sup>

These are the chief translations of the *Æneid* which appeared in Italy in the course of the 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries. The more recent versions are those of Bondi, (Parma, 1793,) and of the celebrated Alfieri (Pisa, 1804.) The *Æneid* of Annibal Caro was

<sup>1</sup> Tiraboschi, *Stor. dell. Letter. Ital.* Paitoni, *Biblioteca degli Autori Antichi Volgarizzati*.

the first book that Alfieri ever read from beginning to end.<sup>1</sup> When he had subsequently acquired the Latin language, he became a great student of Virgil; and in his memoirs, he attributes to his frequent perusal of the *Æneid* his whole skill in dramatic composition. At length, during his stay at Paris in the year 1790, he undertook, for the sake of amusement, to translate some detached portions of that poem. The pieces he selected were those from the perusal of which he had derived the highest gratification. Finding the occupation no less useful than agreeable, and being farther stimulated to persist in it from his apprehension of losing the habit of composing in blank verse, he at length entered regularly on the first book, and having continued his labour from time to time, he completed it a short while before his death. Alfieri, however, was not particularly well qualified to be the translator of Virgil. He resembled the Latin poet in condensation of thought; but in other respects, his style, naturally rugged and abrupt, is but ill adapted to express the long-resounding march and divine melody of his original.

The oldest translation of Virgil's *Eclogues* is that by Bernardo Pulci, the brother of the well-known romantic poet, Luigi Pulci. The best version, however, is one of more recent date by Andrea Lori, (Venice, 1554,) which, during the last century, was usually published as a suitable accompaniment to it, in the same volume with the *Æneid* of Annibal Caro. The *Georgics*, by Bernardino Daniello, first published in 1545, is generally employed to complete the Italian collections of the works of Virgil.

Octavien de Saint Gelais, Bishop of Angouleme, who lived in the reigns of Charles VIII. and Louis XII., and who, as we have already seen, translated *Terence* into French, also converted the *Æneid* into his own rude and barbarous language. The MS. was addressed by him, and presented, to Louis XII. in the year 1500; but the author died about two years afterwards, and before it was printed. It received some corrections from one of his surviving friends, and was at length published in 1509, in a small volume folio. It was reprinted in 1529 and 1540. This translation is executed in verses of ten syllables, which, to a modern reader, has a very bad

<sup>1</sup> *Memor. di V. Alfieri*, c. 6.



effect; that sort of measure having subsequently been appropriated chiefly to ludicrous poetry. The alternation, too, of masculine and feminine rhymes, which became an indispensable rule among modern French poets, is altogether neglected, and, indeed, was scarcely in observance among the bishop's contemporaries.

Several poets, who soon after followed the bishop's example, produced somewhat better translations than their predecessor. Such are the versions of Louis des Masures, (Lyons, 1560,) and of the brothers Robert and Antoine D'Agneau, printed in 1582, with a dedication to Henry III. This last translation has so far the advantage of those which preceded it, that the heroic measure is employed instead of verses of ten syllables; but the expressions are often barbarous, and the style is frequently so obscure, that many passages can only be understood by having recourse to the original.

The first version that can be considered as reflecting, in any degree, an image of the dignity and grace of the Latin poet, was that of Segrais. In some of his eclogues, and other minor poems, he had introduced a few imitations of Virgil, which were regarded as peculiarly happy. This encouraged him to proceed with the *Æneid*, the first six books of which he published in 1668, and the last in 1681. It was highly extolled soon after its appearance by M. Baillet, Regnier Desmarais, St Evremont, and all the most eminent writers of the time. The chief fault of this version is, that, like many other translations which are in other respects far superior, it is by much too free, and presents us with a paraphrase, rather than a translation. In the fourth book, for example, the translator exceeds by one third the number of verses in the original.

The Abbé Marolles, who has *translated* so many of the Latin poets in prose and verse, translated Virgil's *Æneid* into both. Some of his first attempts and sketches in verse appeared in 1671, and the whole works of Virgil in 1673. This is perhaps the worst of all the bad translations of the Abbé Marolles. None of his versions could be tolerable, from the rapidity with which he executed them, despatch being his great object and chief boast. It need not, then, be wondered at, that his version of the works of Virgil is prosaic, constrained, and obscure,—that his expressions are flat and vulgar, and his words, even for the age in which he wrote, frequently obsolete. The only part of his book which is in any degree useful or well

executed, is his criticism on the works of former translators. The prose version by Marolles preceded that in rhyme, having been printed in 1649, with a dedication to Louis XIV.

The only other prose translation which I think it necessary to mention, is that of the Jesuit Catrou ; not so much on account of the translation itself, as of the learned and ingenious notes by which it was accompanied. As early as the year 1708, he had completed a translation of the *Eclogues* with annotations, in which he attempted to explain the design and object of each of them. He afterwards published his translation of all the works of Virgil in six volumes, with prefaces, notes, and discourses. The version itself has been chiefly blamed for inclining the meaning of the Latin poet to what corresponded with the views which the Jesuit had himself adopted in his dissertations.

Of all the French translations, however, of Virgil, that of Delille, who has versified both the *Georgics* and *Æneid*, is by far the most celebrated. His translation of the former, which is said to have been much admired by Voltaire and the King of Prussia, was executed as early as 1769 ; but that of the *Æneid* did not appear till long after. Few persons were better qualified for the task by warmth of fancy and feeling, extent of poetical reading, and dexterity in managing the resources of their native language. The great faults of the translation lie in redundancy and interpolation. The French lines often amount to double the number of the corresponding Latin verses, and are frequently a paraphrase of some slight hint in the original. Thus the three following lines of the *Æneid* are expanded into twelve :—

Vendidit hic auro patriam, dominumque potentem  
Imposuit ; fixit leges pretio atque refixit.  
Hic thalamum invasit natæ, vetitosque hymenæos.

Ils ont leur place ici ces lâches mercenaires,  
Qui vendent leur patrie à des loix étrangères.  
La peine suit de près ce père incestueux  
Qui jetta sur sa fille un œil voluptueux ;  
Et jusques dans son lit portant sa flamme impure,  
D'un horrible hyménée outragea la nature.  
Ils sont jugés ici tous ces juges sans foi  
Qui de l'intérêt seul reconnoissoient la loi ;  
Qui mettant la justice à l'infames enchères,  
Dictoient, et retraisoient leurs arrêts mercenaires ;

Et de qui la balance inclinée à leur choix  
Corrompt la justice, et fit mentir les lois.

This, after all, does not express the meaning of the original, and gives us very little idea of the manner of Virgil, one of whose chief characteristics is condensation of thought. The translation of the *Georgics* presented still more difficulties than the *Æneid* to a French poet. Ideas of meanness, and poverty, and wretchedness, were in France long associated with the profession of husbandry. "A translation," says Delille, in the preliminary discourse prefixed to his version of the *Georgics*; "a translation of this poem, were it undertaken by an author of genius, would have been better calculated than any other work for adding to the riches of our language. A version of the *Æneid* itself, however well executed, would in this respect be of less utility, inasmuch as the genius of our tongue accommodates itself more easily to the description of heroic achievements, than to the details of natural phenomena, and of the operations of husbandry. To force it to express these with suitable dignity would be a real conquest over that false delicacy which it has contracted from our unfortunate prejudices." Far different must have been the emotions with which this exquisite performance of Virgil was read by an ancient Roman, while he recollected that period in the history of his country, when dictators were called from the plough to the defence of the state, and after having led monarchs in triumph, returned again to the same happy and independent occupation.

Since the time of Delille, there have been a number of French translations: of these the best is that by M. Hyacinthe de Gaston, which was published in the commencement of the present century.

There is a French book, entitled *Genie de Virgile* (4 vols. 8vo, 1810), a posthumous work of Malfilatre, in which the best French translations of the most striking passages of Virgil are brought together and compared with the original.

In the most ancient periods of English translation, the originals were so scrupulously followed, that the phrases and construction were frequently Latin: and, in defiance of the precept of Horace, it was considered as an established and inviolable rule to interpret word for word, and verse for verse, so that the number of lines should be neither more nor less than those of the original. This servile practice obscured the clearest, and deformed the most beau-



tiful parts of the ancient authors, who were thus rendered not Latin, without being made English.

While classical translation was yet in its infancy in England, Gawin Douglas, Bishop of Dunkeld in Scotland, executed his celebrated version of the *Æneid*. The author, in his *Palice of Honour*, introduces Venus, who presents him with a book, which proves to be Virgil's *Æneid*, and commands him to translate it into his native language; a task which it is well known he has performed with wonderful felicity. He began this work in January, 1512, and finished it, together with the supplement written by Mapheus Vegius, in July, 1513. The completion of such a production in eighteen months, at a time when no metrical version of a classic had yet appeared in English, is truly astonishing: for it is executed with equal fidelity and spirit; it shows a perfect knowledge of the language of the original, a command of a copious and varied phraseology, and it is farther recommended by many beautiful specimens of original poetry, which are prefixed to each of the thirteen books under the name of Prologues. This work, which was written in the reigns of Henry VIII. in England, and James IV. in Scotland, may be compared with the translation of the second and fourth books of the *Æneid*, in blank verse, by Lord Surrey, who was nearly contemporary with the Bishop, and with that of Phaer, who wrote in the reign of Queen Mary of England. Surrey's version is said to have been the first composition in blank verse in the English language, and is executed with the fidelity of the age, as also with considerable elegance of expression. Phaer's translation was in couplets of fourteen syllables, with the occasional introduction of a triplet—

When Asia's state was overthrown, and Priam's kingdom stout,  
All guiltless, by the power of gods above was rooted out.

Parts of the works of Virgil were rendered into English by several eminent hands during the first half of the seventeenth century. The *Georgics* were translated by May (1622); the first book of the *Æneid* by Sandys (1627); the second by Sir John Denham (1656); part of the fourth by Waller (1658); and about the same period the whole works were translated by Ogilby. The English translators of this period, like those at the close of the preceding century, seem to have had no other care than to render line for line, and to have placed their whole merit in presenting a literal and servile copy

of their original. By this mistaken ambition of exactness, they degraded at once their author and themselves, though many of them were well qualified for their task, not only by critical knowledge, but by poetical genius. Denham, indeed, as appears from his preface to the second book of the *Æneid*, and from his poetical commendation of Fanshaw's version of the *Pastor Fido*, which contains a very judicious character of a good translation, was perfectly aware of the necessity of emancipating the art from the drudgery of counting lines and interpreting single words. But though he saw the better way, he has not pursued it with great success. He is still deficient in freedom, and he has persisted in the old practice of continuing the sense ungracefully from one couplet to another. "Denham's versions of Virgil," says Dr Johnson, "are not pleasing, but they taught Dryden to please better." The translation of the *Æneid*, by Richard Earl of Lauderdale, was printed in 2 vols. in 1690; and we are informed by Walpole, in his *Catalogue of Noble Authors*, that the MS. of this version was communicated to Dryden, who adopted many of the lines into his own translation.

The version by Dryden is so well known and generally read, that any remarks on it may be spared. All readers have admired its spirit and freedom; and, at the time when it appeared, it certainly excelled everything of the kind in the English language. It was the work, however, of haste and indigence; and hence,—while it exhibits the fire and energy of the great poet who produced it, his unbounded command of language, and happy audacity,—it is often erroneous, diffuse, licentious, and negligent. It is of importance towards perfecting a translation, that the genius of the translator should be in some measure akin to that of the original author. But Dryden had not patience enough to bestow on his productions those unwearied touches of art, by which the *Georgics* and the *Æneid* have been elaborated to such perfection. Carelessness is one of his characteristics; laborious polish is the chief distinction of the Mantuan bard. The English poet had little relish for the pathetic; he was insensible to tender impressions, and had no comprehension of the natural language of the heart which Virgil so beautifully uttered. His genius was not equable or majestic; he regarded not minute elegancies, or the beauties of accurate proportion; he delighted in argument and sarcasm, in daring sallies of opinion or eccentricities of wit; and strong reason, rather than quick sensibility, predomi-

nated in his breast. He has thus imparted to the *Æneid* the colouring of his own mind, in place of that by which it was before characterised. His translation wants the dignity, tenderness, and equable delicacy of the original; but it has a freedom, a vigour, and vivacity, of which the original affords but few examples. The importance of some affinity of genius between a poet and his translator is apparent, from the excellence of those passages which were most consonant to Dryden's genius, as contrasted with others which he would not himself have composed. There is an ease and spirit in the martial and descriptive parts which have never been surpassed; but the simplicity, and delicacy, and pathos of the Roman poet have almost entirely disappeared.

Dryden's translation of the whole works of Virgil was published in 1697. His previous versions of the *Pollio*, and some episodes, had shown how well he was qualified for the task, and public expectation had been highly excited during its performance. The hopes entertained of it were not disappointed. It appears to have satisfied his friends—with exception of Milbourn, to have silenced his enemies, and for a time to have deterred from competition. When admiration, however, had subsided, and the translation was more coolly examined, it was found to be sometimes unfaithful and licentious. “Those,” says Dr Johnson, “who could find faults, thought they could avoid them; and Dr Brady attempted in blank verse a translation of the *Æneid*, which, when dragged into the world, did not live long enough to cry. With not much better success, Trapp, when his tragedy and prelections had given him reputation, attempted another blank version of the *Æneid*, to which, notwithstanding the slight regard with which it was treated, he had afterwards perseverance enough to add the *Eclogues* and *Georgics*. His book may continue its existence, as long as it is the clandestine refuge of schoolboys.” The translation itself is harsh and abrupt, but the notes appended are valuable. Brady's translation was printed in 1716; Trapp's *Æneid* was first published in 1719, and afterwards, along with the *Eclogues* and *Georgics*, in 1735.

The next version of the *Æneid* which enjoys any celebrity is that of Christopher Pitt, whose frame of mind was better calculated than that of Dryden to exhibit his author's peculiar characteristics. Encouraged by the success of his translation of Vida, he proceeded to a greater undertaking. In 1729, he published a version of the



first book of the *Æneid*; he some time afterwards added three or four more, and at length a complete translation was printed in 1740. In this arduous attempt, Pitt no doubt possessed many advantages over Dryden. As he was later in the attempt, he naturally observed the errors of that great poet, and avoided them—discovered his beauties, and improved on them; and as he was not impelled by necessity, he took leisure to polish, correct, and finish. Before he completed his labour, he had an opportunity, likewise, of studying Pope's version of the *Iliad*, as a model of exact, equable, and splendid versification. Aided by such advantages, he avoided many errors of his predecessor, and laboured particular passages to greater perfection, though, it must be admitted, that he sometimes attempts to embellish what he found perfect, and to gild the sterling gold. "If the two versions," says Dr Johnson, "were compared, perhaps the result would be, that Dryden leads the reader forward by his general vigour and sprightliness, and Pitt often stops him, to contemplate the excellence of a single couplet; that Dryden's faults are forgotten in the hurry of delight, and that Pitt's beauties are neglected in the languor of a cold and listless perusal; that Pitt pleases the critics, and Dryden the people; that Pitt is quoted, and Dryden read." As an example of Pitt's wonderful success in a few brilliant passages, I may, perhaps, be permitted to quote his splendid, though somewhat paraphrastic, description of the battle of Actium, as delineated on the shield of *Æneas*—

Amid the flood two navies rose to sight,  
 With beaks of brass—the immortal Actian fight;  
 All charged with war the boiling billows roll'd,  
 And the vast ocean flamed with arms of gold.  
 Here leads divine Augustus through the floods  
 The sons of Rome, her fathers, and her gods:  
 From his high stern the martial scene surveys,  
 While streaming splendours round his temples blaze;  
 His sparkling eyes a keener glory shed,  
 Than his great father's star, that glitters o'er his head.

Next, with kind gales, the care of every god,  
 Agrippa leads his squadron through the flood;  
 A naval crown adorns the warrior's brows,  
 And fierce he pours amid the embattled foes.

There brings proud Antony his various bands  
 From distant nations, and from barbarous lands:  
 Dispeopled Egypt fills the watery plain,  
 And the whole Eastern world o'erspreads the main.

But O !—the curse of Rome, and shame of war,  
His Pharian consort follows in the rear.

Rush the fierce fleets to fight ! beneath their oars,  
And clashing beaks, the foaming ocean roars !  
All big with war the floating castles ride,  
In bulk enormous, o'er the yielding tide ;  
The frothy waves like moving mountains sweep,  
Or isles uprooted, rolling round the deep ;  
Spears, darts, and flames, fly furious o'er the main ;  
The fields of Neptune take a crimson stain.  
The beauteous queen, amid the dire alarms,  
With her loud timbrels calls her hosts to arms,  
Flies to the fight, nor sees the snakes that wait  
And hiss behind, dread ministers of fate.  
Against great Neptune, in his strength array'd,  
And beauteous Venus, and the blue-eyed maid,  
Engage the dog Anubis on the floods,  
And the lewd herd of Egypt's monster gods.  
In polish'd steel, conspicuous from afar,  
Amid the tumult storms the god of war.  
Her robes all rent, with many an ample stride,  
Grim Discord stalk'd triumphant o'er the tide :  
Next with her bloody scourge Bellona flies,  
And leads in fatal pomp the furies of the skies.

Meantime, enthroned on Actium's towering height,  
The God of Day surveys the raging fight,  
And bends his twanging bow—With sudden dread,  
At the dire signal all Arabia fled ;  
At once retire, in wild confusion hurl'd,  
Egypt and all th' assembled Eastern world.  
Amid the slaughter of the fight was seen,  
Pale with the fears of death, the Pharian Queen :  
Aghast she calls the kind propitious gales  
To speed her flight ; and spreads her silken sails.  
The God display'd her figure, full in view,  
As o'er the floods with western winds she flew.

Since the time of Pitt, there has been no translation of the *Æneid* of much merit or celebrity, though it is said that one by Beresford (1794), in blank verse, is less known than it deserves to be. That of Dr Symmons, which is in rhyme, is considered as stiff, and as overloaded with ornament. Several very able translations of the *Eclogues* and *Georgics* have appeared subsequently to Pitt's. The year after the publication of Pitt's *Æneid*, Martyn, the celebrated

botanist, produced his translation of the *Eclogues* and *Georgics*, which is chiefly valuable for the agricultural and botanical notes by which it is accompanied. Joseph Warton likewise translated the *Eclogues* and *Georgics*; and his excellent version, in which he corrected the inaccuracies and retrenched the luxuriances of Dryden, was published, along with Pitt's *Æneid*, by Dodsley, in 1763; 4 vols. This edition is accompanied with valuable notes and observations, from Spence, Holdsworth, and others; with Essays on Pastoral, Didactic, and Epic Poetry, and with Dissertations on the Sixth Book of the *Æneid*, by Warburton; on the Shield of *Æneas*, by W. Whitehead; and on the Character of Iapis, by Bishop Atterbury. Sotheby's version of the *Georgics*, which appeared about twenty-five years ago, obtained great and merited applause, as one of the closest, and at the same time one of the most poetical, versions that had ever been executed, of a classical author; and it has only been objected to it, that the verses are occasionally infected with Darwinian expressions, and a Darwinian modulation, altogether at variance with the simplicity and natural graces of the original.

In the year 1808, there appeared two contemporaneous translations of the *Georgics*; the one in rhyme, by Stowell—and the other in blank verse, by Deare. Such versions certainly were not called for, either by the small number or indifferent quality of those that had preceded them.

The graver an assembly may be, the more quickly is its risibility excited by trifling jests and ludicrous incidents. In like manner, the more solemn and majestic a poem, it admits of being the more easily and successfully parodied. Accordingly, no work of antiquity has been so frequently burlesqued as the *Æneid* of Virgil; and in spite of a certain feeling of indignation at beholding such an exquisite performance subjected to so unworthy a transmutation, we cannot refrain from being amused at the wonderful contrasts presented to our preconceived ideas.

Hegemon, the Thasian, as we are informed by Aristotle, was the inventor of parodies. The Athenians were peculiarly delighted with this sort of entertainment, and Homer was the great and inexhaustible resource for their favourite diversion.<sup>1</sup> Some specimens

<sup>1</sup> Athenæus, Lib. IV. c. 5.



and fragments of this kind of poetry, which still remain, possess considerable pleasantry, and much dexterity of comic perversion; and we can easily conceive their effect on a people who had all Homer in their recollection. The *Æneid* does not appear to have been subjected to a similar treatment among the Romans; yet, notwithstanding their dignity and pride, I am not sure but they might have enjoyed a laugh at the expense of their great national poet, had he been exhibited to them in a dress sufficiently fantastic: at least, they did not reject on the stage those *Exodia* and mimetic performances which presented them with a parody of their gravest tragedies.

In modern Europe, the Italians led the way in this species of composition; and in the year 1633, one of their comic poets, called Lalli, published a parody of the *Æneid*, under the title *L'Eneide Travestita*. The first edition was followed by four others; and Vavassor, in his work *De Ludicrá Dictione*, mentions, that a similar attempt had been made by several Italian writers of his own time.

In the year 1648, Scarron commenced his plan of publishing a book of the *Æneid* burlesqued, once a-month, each book being dedicated to a different patron. He did not proceed farther than the seventh book; but the part which he has executed, has placed him at the head of all writers who have betaken themselves to this species of buffoonery; and we cannot help being, in some degree, amused by the ingenuity with which he elicits matter of mirth from all that is most dignified, pathetic, and sublime. Thus, in the description of the games, in the Fifth *Æneid*, Virgil everywhere supports the majesty of the epic narration: his persons are heroes, their actions are suitable to their characters, and we feel our passions seriously interested in the issue of the several contests. The same scenes, travestied by Scarron, are ludicrous in the extreme. His heroes have the same names, they are engaged in the same actions, they have even a grotesque resemblance in character to their prototypes; but they have all the meanness, rudeness, and vulgarity, of ordinary prize-fighters, hackney-coachmen, horse-jockeys, and watermen; and the prizes are accommodated with perfect propriety to the manners of the contending parties. Boileau, though a great admirer of Virgil, gave some encouragement to this species of composition, by introducing into his *Lutrin* several paro-

dies on his favourite poet;<sup>1</sup> and Furetiere, so well known as the author of the *Roman Bourgeois*, burlesqued the Fourth Book of the *Æneid*, under the title of *Amours d'Enée et Didon*. "J'ai trouvé," says Goujet in his *Bibliothèque Française*, "ce quatrième livre fort ridicule, rempli d'indécences, et plus propre à faire rire le vil peuple qu'à amuser un honnête homme."<sup>2</sup>

The English were not slow in following the example which had been set them by Scarron, and other French writers. In 1664 and 1678 Charles Cotton published his "*Scarronides, or Virgil Travestie, a Mock Poem on the First and Fourth Books of Virgil's Æneid, in English Burlesque*." This work is not, as the title seems to imply, a translation from Scarron. It is not inferior to the French production, and was so excellent of its kind, and so popular, that twelve editions were printed before the middle of the 18th century. Cotton's *Scarronides* was followed by several other works of a similar description, of which I can give only the titles and the dates. "Cataplus, or Æneas, his descent to Hell, a Mock Poem, in imitation of the Sixth Book of Virgil's Æneis, in English Burlesque, 1671."—"Maronides, or Virgil Travestie, being a new Paraphrase on the Fifth Book of Virgil's Æneids, in Burlesque Verse, by John Philips, 1672. The Sixth Book, by the same, 1673."—"Scarronides, or Virgil Travestie, a Mock Poem, on the Second Book of Virgil's Æneis, in English Burlesque, by John Smith, 1691."

On the whole, this species of composition pleases only on a short specimen. The incongruous association of dignity and meanness excites risibility chiefly from its being unexpected. Hence Cotton's and Scarron's Virgil entertain but for a few pages—the composition soon becomes tedious, and at length disgusting.

There has been another frequent abuse of the works of Virgil, by forming centos of his verses, or half verses, which were thus changed, or perverted, into a new signification. Hosidius Geta, who was consul of Rome in the reign of the Emperor Claudius, formed a tragedy on the story of Medea, from the lines of Virgil. The *Cento Nuptialis* of Ausonius is an ingenious, though scandalous attempt

<sup>1</sup> Muse, redis moi donc, &c. ch. 1. v. 9.

Cependant cet Oiseau, &c. 2. 1.

La Sibylle à ces mots déjà hors d'elle même, &c. v. 77.

<sup>2</sup> Tom. V. p. 146.

of this description; and I doubt if the apology he pleads for it, can be admitted as an excuse.—“Jussum erat; quodque est potentissimum imperandi genus, rogabat qui jubere poterat.”<sup>1</sup>

## HORACE.

The works of Horace were preserved, and several copies were made of them in the 6th century, during the Consulship of Vettius Mavortius. From that time, they continued, like the Poems of Virgil, to be well known during the Middle Ages. They are frequently cited by the authors of that period, and were commented on by Helenius Acro and Porphyrio, who are generally supposed to have lived in the 7th century.

None of the MSS. of Horace are of such high repute and value as the four celebrated *Codices*, which I have mentioned of the works of Virgil. Several, however, of considerable authority and antiquity, were collected at the revival of literature, and subsequently came into the possession of Lambinus, Cruquius, Fabricius, and other eminent editors of Horace. Of this sort were five MSS. in the Vatican library; and the four *Codices Blandinii*, or *Blandiniani*, which were brought to Rome from a convent library of the Benedictines near Ghent, and are supposed to be as ancient as the 9th century. In the Royal Library at Paris, there are sixty-one MSS. extant, fourteen of which contain the whole works of Horace, and the others comprehend parts of his writings. Of those which comprise the complete works, there are four which are very accurate, and are supposed to be as old as the 10th and 11th centuries. The one which is believed the most ancient, has the following inscription:—

Hic liber est, Benedicte, tuus, venerande, per orbem;  
Obtulit Herbertus servus et ipse tuus—

Which gives us about as much information as if it had been told,

<sup>1</sup> See a long catalogue of centos of this description, ap. Fabricius, *Bib. Lat.* Lib. I. c. 12. § 12.



that the book belonged to John, and was presented to him by James. Another of these MSS. bears the inscription—

D. D. Puteanis fratribus D. Gothofredus, M. D.

The third MS. had belonged to Pierre Daniel of Orleans, from whom it passed to the Library of Colbert, and thence to the Bibliothèque du Roi. At the time when Bandini drew up his catalogue, there was extant, in the Medicean-Laurentian Library, a MS. of Horace, supposed to be of the 12th century, which had belonged to Petrarch, (as appears from his autograph on the first page,) and was enriched with marginal annotations in his hand. This copy had been purchased by Petrarch in 1347. Some time after his death, it fell into the hands of a person called Jac. Hebrius, who sold it at Padua to Ludovicus Podicatharus, in the year 1458. It was bequeathed by him to Cosmo Puccius, Bishop of Arezzo, in 1504. It next belonged to Laurentius Rodolphus, who, in 1549, presented it to Antonius Petreius, a Florentine canon, from whose hands it was transferred into the Laurentian Library.

In the old MSS. of Horace, the text was generally, if not universally, accompanied with a very copious marginal commentary; and to make room for this, the space allowed for the Latin verses was too much contracted. The commencement, likewise, of a new ode or epistle, was frequently decorated with illuminations, which, by also occupying a portion of space, tended still more to limit that which was reserved for the text. The transcriber, in consequence, frequently found, that one verse of the poem could not in writing be contained in one line of his paper, but that a part of a verse must necessarily be carried on to a second; and as he was not sufficiently skilful to discern where each verse properly terminated, the commencement of a new one was not marked by a capital letter, or any other distinction. Hence the confusion introduced in the metre of the lines, and the disputes with regard to their division. Thus, for example, it has been contended, that the lines in the Eighth Ode of the First Book, instead of being printed as they now are,—

Lydia, dic, per omnes

Te Deos oro, Sybarin cur properas amando

Perdere ? cur apricum

Oderit campum, patiens pulveris atque solis ?

Cur neque militaris, &c.

ought to be arranged in the following manner :—

Lydia, dic, per omnes te Deos oro,

Sybarin cur properas amando perdere ?

Cur apricum oderit campum, patiens

Pulveris atque solis ? cur neque militaris, &c.

Sometimes too the copyists wrote lines without the first letters, intending afterwards to emblazon them, which in many instances was forgotten entirely. Thus, in the line of the first ode,—

Me doctarum hederæ præmia frontium,

the first letter was left blank in the oldest MSS. and the word *Te* was adopted by conjecture in the ancient editions, till Janus Rutgersius proposed an alteration to *Me*, which correction has been admitted in almost all the impressions published since his time, though Dr Hare attempted to justify and revive the old reading of *Te*.

It is not very well known what MSS. were employed in the preparation of the first edition of Horace. That impression is without date of place or time, but it is generally, though not universally, believed by bibliographers to have been printed by Zarotus, at Milan, in 1470. It is not remarkable for its correctness. Gesner judges that it was printed without emendation from the Codex employed; and, therefore, that its text is at least entitled to the faith due to a MS. It was shortly afterwards followed by another edition, which was unquestionably printed at Milan by Zarotus, in 1474; and by the scarce edition of Naples, which was also of that year, and was formed either on the same MS. as the *Editio Princeps*, or on the *Editio Princeps* itself. The Venice edition of 1481 includes the valuable commentaries of Acron and Porphyrio, which had been published about ten years before, by Zarotus. The Florentine edition of 1482 comprehends the commentary of Landini, and is distinguished by a beautiful ode of Politian, in-

served before the body of the text, in which Horace is celebrated on account of his poetry, and Landini for the new light which he had thrown on it :

Vates Threicio blandior Orpheo :  
 Seu malis fidibus sistere lubricos  
 Amnes, seu tremulo ducere pollice  
 Ipsis cum latebris feras.  
 Vates Æolii pectinis arbiter ;  
 Qui princeps Latiam sollicitas chelyn,  
 Nec segnis titulos addere noxiis  
 Nigro carmine frontibus—  
 Quis te a barbaricâ compede vindicat ?  
 Quis frontis nebulam dispulit ; et situ  
 Deterso, levibus restituit choris  
 Curatâ juvenem cute ?  
 O qui nuper eras nubilus ; et malo  
 Abductus senio ; qui nitidos ades  
 Nunc vultus referens, docta fragrantibus  
 Cinctus tempora floribus.  
 Talem purpureis reddere solibus  
 Lætum pube novâ post gelidas nives  
 Serpentem positis exuviis solet  
 Verni temperies poli :  
 Talem te choreis reddidit ; et lyræ  
 Landinus veterum laudibus æmulus  
 Qualis tu solitus Tibur ad uvidum  
 Blandam tendere barbiton.  
 Nunc te deliciis, nunc decet et levi  
 Lascivire joco, nunc puerilibus  
 Insertum thyasis, aut fide garrulâ  
 Inter ludere virgines.

The edition of Horace which Politian has thus poetically celebrated, is one of the most correct and perfect which appeared during the 15th century. That of Venice, however, of 1492, was more followed in subsequent editions,—not fewer than twelve, printed chiefly at Venice and Milan, having been formed on it, before the end of the century. By that time, impressions of Horace had been published in every town of Italy where the art of printing was known and established.

In the commencement of the following century, there appeared



three principal and leading editions, which were the origin and prototype of almost all those which were published, till near its close,—the Aldine edition,—that of the Junta,—and of Ascensius. These three essentially differ from each other; and in consequence of their variations, the pedigree of almost every edition of the 16th century may be accurately traced. The Aldine edition was published at Venice, 1501, and was reprinted in 1509, 1519, and 1527. These editions are the basis of that of Simon Charpentier, in 1511; that of Henry Stephens, at Paris, in 1513; those at Basil, 1520, and Venice, 1540; five Parisian editions, printed by Colinæus; that which was edited by Pulmannus, Antwerp, 1557, and several of the Plantin editions: Some changes were introduced in the edition, 1555, which Muretus superintended, and which was printed by Paullus Manutius; and these alterations were preserved in several following editions, which, however, may be all considered as belonging to the same class or family. The first edition of the Junta, which came from the press of the celebrated printers of that name at Florence, was published in 1503. It formed the foundation of the editions of Robert Stephens, Paris, 1539, and that which was superintended by Fabricius (Basil, 1555). This last edition, which has been frequently reprinted, comprehends the commentaries of all the ancient grammarians, and also the annotations on Horace, by the scholars who flourished at the revival of learning. The Ascensian editions, so called from being accompanied with the commentary of Badius Ascensius, a celebrated Parisian printer and scholar, were published at Paris in 1503, 11, 16, 19. They were chiefly formed on the Venetian edition, already mentioned, of 1492, and were in turn the basis of other Venetian editions, in 1536, and 1543, as also those of Paris, 1528 and 1543.

At length, Lambinus, who has been termed by bibliographers "*Magnus Horatii Sospitator*," and who was a scholar of no ordinary powers and acuteness, formed a new era in Horatian criticism. His first edition was printed at Lyons; but the Parisian edition, 1567, which was the last that the editor himself corrected, is accounted the best. In these, Lambinus did not servilely follow the Aldine, Juntine, or Ascensian impressions, but adopted from each the readings of which he most approved, and collated them with a number of original MSS.

The next edition which deserves to be mentioned is that of Cruquius (Antwerp, 1579). It has been four or five times reprinted; but Harles is of opinion, that Cruquius is not equal to his predecessor Lambinus in research, ingenuity, and general critical knowledge, though some of his notes are satisfactory in the solution of difficult passages. Wieland, in his excellent notes to his translation of Horace's *Satires*, has frequently animadverted on the fanciful references and allusions which Cruquius thinks he has discovered in his author. There were but few celebrated editions of Horace in the course of the seventeenth century. The best known are those of Torrentius (Antwerp, 1608); of Daniel Heinsius (Antwerp, 1612 and 1629), to the last of which he prefixed his dissertation, *De Satirâ Horatianâ*; of Tanaquil Faber (1671); and the *Variorum* and Delphin editions, the last being one of the best in the class to which it belongs. Some of the editions which appeared in this age are illustrated by the *Lectiones Venusinæ* of Rutgersius, who, having come from Sweden to France, while Robert Stephens (the grandson) was preparing an impression of Horace, and being much delighted with its beauty and correctness, presented him with the notes which he had written on that poet. They accordingly appeared in Stephens' edition, 1613, and being favourably received by the public, and highly esteemed in the learned world, were inserted in the *Variorum* and other editions of this century.

If the seventeenth century produced few editions of superlative excellence, the deficiency has been supplied in the age which followed. Baxter's edition, which was published at its very commencement (London, 1701, 1725), is pronounced by Harwood to be by far the best which in his time had as yet appeared; but Harles and other writers have not formed by any means so favourable an opinion of its merits. It comprehends a selection from the old grammarians, from some of the more modern commentators, particularly Lambinus, Cruquius, and Torrentius, and a few notes by the editor himself.

In the interval which elapsed between the publication of Baxter's first and second editions, Bentley brought forth his celebrated Horace. Every one knows the style of emendation and criticism pursued by that great scholar,—his audacity, but occasional felicity,—and his system of supplying his readings from the conjectures

of his own acute and vigorous mind, rather than by the process of examining MSS. and collating editions. In his notes, he has thrown aside all observations relating to history, and to the customs and manners of the ancients, which elsewhere supply such large commentaries on Horace; and has contented himself with arranging the metres of the odes, removing the faults which he supposed had crept into the text, and elucidating those passages that had been darkened by the ignorance or carelessness of transcribers. Baxter, in his second edition, considering this work of Bentley as a rival of his own, attacked it with much acrimony. Johnson, under the feigned name of Aristarchus Bentleianus, in his edition, (Nottingham, 1717,) ranged himself on the same side. A more able and equally bitter antagonist appeared in Cunningham, who, in his Horace, (London, 1721,) proved himself to be the most formidable opponent who had yet criticised Bentley's boasted edition. Harles, with good reason, calls this age of the editions of Horace *valde litigiosa*.<sup>1</sup>

Sanadon, in forming the text of his editions, printed at Paris, 1728 and 1756, accompanied by a French translation, sometimes adopted the readings of Bentley, but more frequently those of Cunningham. There are also a few emendations of his own. He has likewise altered the common arrangement of the odes, and disposed them according to the chronological order in which he believes them to have been originally written. The editor was himself a writer of verses, and a tolerable good judge of poetry; so that he has entered with more feeling and spirit than many other commentators into the poetical merits and defects of his author. His commentary is also peculiarly useful in explaining the circumstances in which the odes were written, the allusions to the characters of contemporaries and to the political occurrences of the day. Harles, however, accuses him of being too much addicted to the desire of discovering allegories, particularly of a political tendency, in many of the odes, (*Incautus Allegoriarum venator*).<sup>2</sup> Thus, he conjectures that the Grecian heroes celebrated in the sixth ode of the first book, beginning,

Scriberis Vario fortis et hostium, &c.

<sup>1</sup> *Brevior Notitia*, T. I. p. 266.

<sup>2</sup> *Introduct. in Notit. Litter. Roman.* T. II. p. 388.



allegorically represent Roman generals and statesmen of the poet's own day; that under Mars, Merion, and Diomed, he describes Statilius Taurus, Marcus Titius, and Mæcenas; and that under the character *Duplicis Ulyssis*, which is usually supposed to mean the crafty Ulysses, he intends to denote both Agrippa and Messala, who commanded the fleets of Octavius in the wars of Sicily and Actium. He also thinks, that, in the fifteenth ode—

O navis, referent in mare te novi, &c.

the distracted state to which the empire would be driven, if Augustus abandoned the helm of government, has been figured by a vessel which is tossed about, the sport of waves and tempests; and that, in the following ode, where the lyric poet sings the rape of Helen, with its fatal consequences to Troy, he means to censure the guilty passion of Antony for Cleopatra, and to predict the ruin which it would draw down on him.

Gesner took Baxter's edition as the basis of the text of his *Horace*, which was printed at Leipsic in 1752. He has given a few emendations of his own, and has added notes, which fully testify his extensive erudition. This impression was reprinted in 1788, with some additional observations by Zeunius.

The edition of Poinset de Sivry, (Paris, 1777,) is not held in very high estimation. The editor's chief object was to point out Horace's imitations of the Greek poets, and particularly to show, that all those passages in the odes, which have in any degree an immoral tendency, were not his own composition, but were translated from Alcman, Stesichorus, and Alcæus. This principle of criticism, though it has much foundation in truth, has been pushed too far by the learned editor. He has, also, made a number of unauthorized alterations on the text, and, by a bold innovation, has divided several of the odes into two or more parts.

The editions of Jani, Leipsic, 1778, and 1809, comprehend only the odes of Horace, but so far as they extend, are among the best of that poet that have as yet been published. He has illustrated the text with care and judgment, by a collation of several MSS., and the best of the previous editions. The notes are judicious, and the various readings are full. Each ode is introduced by an explanatory notice of its general scope, and the occasion on which it was

written, which is very useful for the full understanding of the piece; and there are some *excursuses* appended. Prefixed, there is a long account of the principal MSS. and all the editions of Horace—a life of the poet drawn up chronologically by the editor, and three dissertations, *De Moribus Horatii*, *De Poësi Lyricâ*, and *De Amicis Horatii*.

Mitscherlich's edition, Leipsic, 1800, like that of Jani, contains only the *Odes* and *Epodes*. The text of this valuable work is extremely pure and correct, and the critical notes are well selected. In what has been called *Æsthetic criticism*—in the judgments passed on the poetical ideas, and poetical expressions, it is superior to the edition of Jani. "The text," says Mr Dibdin, "which is taken from no particular edition, is accompanied by very elaborate notes or commentaries, in which the beauty and force of particular passages are illustrated, in a critical and erudite manner. All the ancient and modern commentators have been carefully consulted, and whatever ability, ingenuity, and successful research are displayed in those copious stores of criticism, have been diligently and successfully collected by this indefatigable editor. Horace is also illustrated by a selection of parallel passages from the old Greek poets. In short, the notes of this edition, though exceedingly voluminous, contain a rich fund of philological information and critical research."

There is a yet more recent, though far inferior, German edition, by Prædicow. In this work, which was printed in 1806, the editor boasts, that he has amended the text in 913 places, which exceeds the number even of Bentley's alterations, so that a Horace almost entirely new has been produced under his hands. We have seen that Poinsonet de Sivry, in his edition, divided some of the odes into two parts, but this German scholar has attempted a different sort of innovation, having frequently joined two odes together, in defiance of the change and difference of their measures.

The editions of Horace by Fea, printed at Rome in 1811, and at Heidelberg, have attracted considerable notice; and Mr Dibdin mentions, that no edition of late years has produced a greater sensation than that of Fea. It contains various readings, from several MSS. in Italy, consulted for the first time, and which serve particularly to elucidate the antiquities of Rome. The editor is spoken

of as presumptuous and acrimonious, though possessed of high qualifications, as an antiquary, a philologist, and a virtuoso.

There are several other editions of Horace, which, being more remarkable for the correctness and elegance of the typography, the splendour of the paper, and beauty of the engravings by which they are accompanied, than for emendations on the text or critical notes, need not here be specified. Such are Pine's Horace, (1733,) and the editions printed by Foulis, Glasgow, 1744,—by Baskerville, Birmingham, 1762,-70,-72,—Bodoni, Parma, 1791, and Didot, Paris, 1799.

King, in his *Anecdotes*, gives a curious account of a Dr Douglas, who, in the time of George II., was physician extraordinary to Queen Caroline, and had collected copies of all the editions of Horace, from the invention of printing till the middle of the 18th century—amounting to about 450 in number. “The man,” says he, “whom I looked on, if I may be allowed the expression, as Horace-mad, was one Dr Douglas, a physician of some note in London. I made an acquaintance with this gentleman on purpose that I might have a sight of his curious library, (if it might be called a library,) which was a large room full of all the editions of Horace that had ever been published, as well as the several translations of that author into the modern languages. If there were any other books in this room, as there were a small number, they were only there for the sake of Horace, and were on no other account valuable to the possessor, but because they contained some parts of Horace, which had been published with select pieces or excerpts out of other Latin authors, for the use of schools; or because the translations of some of the odes and satires were printed in miscellanies, and were not to be found anywhere else. However, I must acknowledge, that the doctor understood his author, whom he had studied with great care and application. Amongst other of his criticisms, he favoured me with a perusal of a dissertation on the first ode, and a defence of Dr Hare's famous emendation of *Te doctarum*, &c. instead of *Me*.” An account of the Dr's collection has been exhibited in an edition of Horace, (London, 1750,) by Watson, who, in preparing it for the press, had free access to the stores of this Horatian library.

Of all Latin poets (with exception, perhaps, of Catullus) Ho-



race is the most difficult to translate. We have seen many brilliant and successful imitations, but no translation. The broad wit of Plautus, the refined delicacy of Terence, the philosophic dignity of Lucretius, the harmonious majesty of Virgil, the amorous fire of Ovid, and even the elegiac tenderness of Tibullus, have been caught by good scholars and poets. But the style of the "Argute Venusian" has hitherto bid defiance to the most refined student and skilful versifier. The beauties of the original consist not so much in the thought or sentiment, as in the language and expression—in the happy choice of phrases, and the felicitous arrangement of words. These excellencies being scarcely transferable to another language, the works of Horace when translated, appear generally flat and tasteless, and altogether undeserving of those eulogies which every age has heaped on the matchless originals. "On traduira toujours Horace," says a French writer, "et Horace sera encore à traduire."

We have seen that most of the Latin classics were translated in Italy, soon after the revival of learning and invention of printing. Owing, however, to the difficulty of the task, no very early version of Horace appeared in the Italian language. The earliest translations of the *Odes* were those of Fabrini, and Georgini Da Jesi, which were not published till the close of the 16th century; and nearly 100 years elapsed before F. Nomi, who was the next translator, published his version at Florence, dedicated, in a canzone, to the Grand Duke of Tuscany. The translation of Francesco Capone came forth at Venice nearly about the same time. Subsequent to that period, those who have rendered the odes of Horace into the Italian language, seem to have fallen into the equally dangerous extremes of paraphrase, and slavish adherence to their original. Mattei in his translation, which he entitles "*Metamorfosi Lirica d'Horatio parafrasato e moralizzato*," informs us "in tutte sue odi ed epodi io tel farò comparire trasformato: di Latino in Toscano, di licentioso in pudico, d'Epicureo in morale: tutti i luoghi dove si tocchino oscenità ho convertito in sensi morali." Paolo Abriani, on the other hand, entitles his version, "*Le Ode d'Horatio, con simil ordine di metro ed egual numero di Sillabe e sovente minore, puramente tradotte*." Two other versions of the *Odes* ap-

peared during the first half of the 18th century, the one by the Abate del Buono, a native of Bologna, and professor in the university of Turin, and the other, which is generally accounted the best Italian version of Horace, by Stefano Pallavicini, secretary to the King of Poland. This last translation is highly applauded by Haym and Paitoni, as also by the Count Algarotti, who, after the death of Pallavicini, which happened in 1742, collected his works, and addressed the edition of them, which he published, to the King of Poland, Augustus III. The translation is entitled, the *Canzoniere d' Orazio*, and is executed in different poetical measures, adapted to the nature of the different subjects presented in the original.

There were translations in Italian of the *Satires* and *Epistles* before the *Odes*. The *Satires* were versified by that celebrated critic and scholar, Lodovico Dolce, in 1559. But though well qualified for this task by his learning and taste, he appears to have wrought from some inferior edition, or inaccurate MSS.; and he has consequently in many passages given an erroneous interpretation of the sense of his author. This work of Dolce, however, was corrected and remodelled; in the commencement of the eighteenth century, by Francesco Maria Biacca, who, according to the affected practice of the Arcadian Society, to which he belonged, assumed the name of Parmindo Ibichense. Francesco Borganelli (or Itarco), another Arcadian, translated the *Satires* in 1730, and the *Epistles* a few years afterwards, in *Terza Rima*.

Paitoni enumerates not fewer than fourteen different Italian versions of Horace's *Art of Poetry*, of which the best is that by Benedetto Pasqualigo, a Venetian nobleman.

In the general collection of Italian translations of the ancient Latin poets, printed at Milan 1735, &c., and entitled *Corpus*, &c. "Raccolta di tutti gli antichi poeti Latini con loro versione nell' Italiana favella,"—the editors, in the eighth and ninth volumes, which contain the works of Horace, have selected, as the best, the translation of the Abate Buono for the *Odes* and *Epodes*—the version of L. Dolce, as improved by Biacca, for the *Satires*—that of Borganelli for the *Epistles*, and of Pasqualigo for the *Art of Poetry*.

The earliest translation of the *Odes* of Horace in French verse, which I find anywhere mentioned, is that by Jacques Mondot, print-

ed in 1579. His work is full of all the faults which characterise the French poets of his age. It is executed in various measures, some of the odes being in verses of eight, and others of twelve syllables. Translations of *Odes* of Horace may be found in the works of all the poets, at the close of the 16th, and commencement of the 17th century, as Joachim de Bellay, Philippe Desportes, Nicolas Rapin, and Colletet. A few of these odes are well executed, and a collection might have been formed from them, which would have given a better idea of the original than the professed, but miserable translations of the whole odes which appeared in the course of the 17th century. The following age promised no better for Horace in its commencement. The version of the Abbé Pellegrin, published at Paris in 1715, merited the severe epigram of M. de la Monnoye:—

Il faudroit, soit dit entre nous,  
A deux Divinités offrir ces deux Horaces—  
Le Latin à Venus, la déesse des Graces,  
Et le Français à son epoux.—

From this period few translations of the *Odes*, and none which were much better than those of the Abbé Pellegrin, appeared till near the close of the century.

Within the last fifty years, the French have made up for the deficiency, at least in the number of their poetical translations of the *Odes* and *Satires*.—"Les Poésies Lyriques d'Horace," says M. Dussault, in his *Annales Littéraires*, "sont, je crois, une des productions de la littérature Latine les plus difficiles à transporter dans une autre langue, et à naturaliser sur un sol étranger. Combien cependant ne s'est il pas rencontré d'écrivains qui ont essayé d'en enrichir nôtre Parnasse! on diroit que la difficulté de l'entreprise a enflammé le zèle des traducteurs; mais je pense que d'autres vues et d'autres motifs ont déterminé leurs efforts, et multiplié leur nombre: les traducteurs en général ne s'aperçoivent guère des difficultés qu'ils ont à vaincre: les odes d'Horace se sont présentées à leurs yeux comme de petites pièces de peu d'étendue; la brièveté de chacune de ces compositions sembloit dispenser d'un travail soutenu: si dans quelques-unes le poète Latin s'est élevé jusque au sublime, il en est beaucoup qu'il semble avoir enfantées en se jouant; plusieurs ne paroissent être que de simples billets; d'autres



ne sont en effet que de légères chansonnettes. La philosophie, qui les a presque toutes inspirées, est une philosophie aimable, qui n'a rien de pédantesque, de sévère, ni de chagrin : elle est à la portée de tout le monde ; elle enseigne, elle invite à jouir de la vie : Horace célèbre les femmes, le vin, les plaisirs ; les traducteurs n'ont vu que les fleurs qui naissent sous ses mains : ils ont cru pouvoir cueillir les roses de Tibur, et s'en couronner, sans les faner et les flétrir ; ils se sont précipités en foule sur ce riche et séduisant butin ; ils ne semblent pas avoir entrevu les pièges cachés sous cette surface riante et trompeuse : leur multitude déconcerte la mémoire, et peu s'en faut qu'elle n'échappe au calcul : ce sont les fastes de la bibliographie, plutôt que ceux de la poésie et de la littérature, qui nous apprennent que depuis 1789, et dans le seul espace de vingt huit années, les *Odes* d'Horace ont été traduites partiellement, ou dans leur totalité, par huit écrivains différens, et qui n'ont pas désespéré de reproduire sur la lyre Française les chants tantôt pleins de majesté, tantôt pleins de grâce, du lyrique Romain."

Of these numerous translations of the *Odes* of Horace, the most agreeable, though perhaps not the most faithful, is that by Daru, which appeared at Paris in the beginning of this century. Daru has also given the best version of the *Satires* and *Epistles*, which, from the time of François Habert, their first translator, in the middle of the 16th century had been even more degraded, than the odes, in the French language. This performance, however, of Daru, by the consent both of French and German critics, has at length approached as near to perfection as the nature of the French language and of the art of translation itself will allow. "Hæc egregia versio," says Klu-gling, "cæteras omnes vincit elegantîâ, suavitate, atque indole vere poeticâ. In *Sermonibus* et *Epistolis* tantâ plerumque fide, tantâque sermonis facilitate, et naturali quâdam elegantîâ, poetæ verba reddidit, ut Horatio plane satisfactum videatur."

I need not occupy the reader with any detail concerning the numerous prose translations of Horace. I shall merely mention, first, that of Dacier (Paris, 1681—Amsterdam, 1691, 1709), which is servile, harsh, and inelegant, and has been chiefly celebrated for the notes which are subjoined ; secondly, that of Sanadon (Paris, 1728), which, though too diffuse, is more agreeable, free, and spirited, than the work of Dacier, and is likewise accompanied by ingenious com-

mentaries and dissertations ; and, thirdly, that of Batteux (Paris, 1750). This last version has been reprinted at Paris in 1823, with a very full commentary by M. Achaintre. Horace himself has declared, that, though heroic song may be converted into prose without totally destroying the poetical spirit ; yet, if the measure and cadence of his own lines in the *Satires* and *Epistles* be changed, no trace of poetry will remain ; because the primary ingredient is not in the matter, or even the sentiments and images, but in the metaphorical dress :

His ego quæ nunc,  
Olim quæ scripsit Lucilius, eripias si  
Tempora certa modosque ; et quod prius ordine verbum est  
Posterius facias, præponens ultima primis—  
Non ut si solvas, “ Postquam discordia tetra  
Belli ferratos postes portasque refregit.”  
Invenias etiam disjecti membra poetæ.

It was long before any English writer undertook the task of translating the whole works of Horace. Parts of them, however, were versified at a very early period. The *Satires* appeared under the title of a “Medicinal Moral” in 1566, and the *Epistles* in the year following. Ben Jonson rendered some of the *Odes* of Horace, and his *Art of Poetry* (London, 1616—1640), in the dry and servile manner of the age ; and Milton turned the ode to Pyrrha, almost word for word, into verse without rhyme. The *Odes* were successively translated by Sir Thomas Hawkins (1635), Ryder (1638), and Holyday (1652) ; and the *Art of Poetry* by Roscommon. In the close of the 17th and commencement of the 18th century, translations of the *Odes* of Horace, by eminent hands, crowded the poetical miscellanies. “In the collection of odes usually called the *Wit's Horace*,” says Francis, in the preface to his translation, “there are many fine but distant imitations of our author, perhaps not inferior to their originals. If any of them were intended for translations, the writers, however eminent in other parts of their characters, have indulged injudiciously a wantonness of imagination, and an affectation of wit, as opposite to the natural simplicity of their author, as to the genius of lyric poetry.” An exception, however, ought to be made in favour of some versions by Dryden, in his miscellany of translations from Theocritus, Lucretius, and Horace. In

these, the simplicity of classical times is admirably preserved, and all the nature and liveliness peculiar to the Venusian poet.

At length a complete translation of the whole works was executed by the Rev. Mr Francis, Rector of Barrow in Suffolk. In this production, a great variety of English measures, adapted to the subject of each ode, has been employed. The translator admits that he has taken a few lines, which he judged to be good, from the versions of his predecessors, and that he was indebted for some of the odes to the Rev. Dr Dunkin. This work, accompanied by a judicious selection of notes, chiefly from Sanadon and Dacier, was first printed in 1743. It was received on its appearance with considerable applause by the public, and has passed through a number of editions.

To the version of the "Works of Horace by several Hands," printed by Dodsley, 1757-59, Mr W. Duncombe, his son Mr J. Duncombe, and Fawkes, the translator of Apollonius Rhodius, were the chief contributors. Some of the translations are spirited and elegant, though, on the whole, they suffer by a comparison with those of Francis. The critical notes have been chiefly compiled from Dacier.

Christopher Smart had turned Horace into prose; but afterwards, thinking that this translation might be injurious to his memory, he determined to write one in verse, which was published at London with the Latin text; but on again considering that his work might become a school book, and consequently the sale be increased, he formed the resolution to revise the prose translation, and print it at the foot of the page. This resolution he executed in the edition of 1767. The most recent translation of the whole works of Horace in verse, is that by Boscawen, published 1793-97.

#### TIBULLUS.

Chance, or the care of some person of taste and learning during the Middle Ages, had preserved a MS. of Tibullus, which was very ancient, but unfortunately much worn on the first pages, and in other parts a good deal injured and mutilated by time. On this *Codex* every other MS. of Tibullus has been formed: for we find, that they all coincide in the same errors and corruptions of the text, as also in those *Lacunæ*, which were occasioned by the defective state of their ex-



emplar. Sometimes, however, the transcribers of these MSS. did not mark the *hiatus* by asterisks, or any other device ; so that lines which were totally unconnected in sense have been conjoined in the MSS. These transcriptions were chiefly made in the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries ; and though their readings be the same, they are very numerous, for Tibullus was a popular writer in that age, and, of all the classics, he was most frequently imitated by the modern Latin poets who flourished previous to the art of printing, as appears from the works of Pontanus, Sannazzarius, and others. In the time of Scaliger, these MSS. of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were the oldest then existing,—the original from which they were taken having perished :—“ *Hujus poetæ,*” says that critic, “ *ea omnia quotquot in Italiâ extant exemplaria recentiora sunt quàm ut inter vetustos libros censeri debeant.*”<sup>1</sup>

The original MS., however, was probably extant at the invention of printing ; but it does not appear to have been employed in preparing the first edition of Tibullus for the press. Those MSS. were used by the editors which were most readily at hand ; and less care seems to have been taken in correcting them, than was usually employed previous to the *Editiones Principes* of other classics.<sup>2</sup> The first edition is without date, but that of 1472 is usually assigned to it. Tibullus was also published in the same year, along with Catullus, Propertius, and the *Sylvæ* of Statius. This impression is without name of place or printer, and it has been disputed by bibliographers whether it was printed by Udalricus Gallus at Rome, or by Vindelin de Spira at Venice. The next edition to be mentioned is one of Tibullus alone (Rome, 1475), done from a MS. which was in the possession of Bernard Cyllenius, but which was less corrected and amended even than those used for the *Editio Princeps*. Cyllenius, however, supplied a valuable commentary for this edition. On it were formed those of Brescia, 1486, and of Venice, 1487 and 1491 ; while the *Editio Princeps* became the basis of that printed by J. de Colonia at Venice, 1475, and at Vicenza, in 1482. It is singular that this ancient class of the editions of Tibullus, which, though not formed on the oldest MS. extant, were yet printed from the transcriptions, were almost entirely neglected by subsequent editors, except Muretus and Doussa, who at least inspected them.

<sup>1</sup> *Castigat. in Tibullum.*

<sup>2</sup> Heyne, *Præf. ad Tibull.*

The editions of Tibullus of the 17th century, commence with the Aldine impressions. The first (of which 3000 copies were printed) appeared at Venice in 1502. Aldus himself, with the assistance of Avantius, acted as editor, and adjusted the text of Tibullus, chiefly on the Roman edition, 1475. The second Aldine edition, 1515, differs considerably from the first, and is regarded as much more correct and valuable. Both comprehend the works of Catullus and Propertius, along with those of Tibullus; and one or other of these Aldine editions has directly, or through the medium of others, served as the basis of all subsequent impressions of Tibullus, whether printed separately or along with Catullus and Propertius.

Muretus chose the second Aldine edition as the foundation of his text; but he collated it, not, indeed, with the *Editio Princeps*, but with the Venetian and Vicentine editions, which had been formed on it. This work, which has been considered as forming an æra in the history of the editions of Tibullus, was printed by Paullus Manutius at Venice, in 1558. Muretus also prepared Catullus and Propertius for the press; but the three poets have each separate titles and a separate numbering of the pages, so that they may be divided or united at pleasure. In one of his letters to P. Manutius, Muretus says, “Si fieri posset et sex aut septem Tibulli Regiâ Chartâ describerentur, esset mihi summo opere gratum; hâc de re ipse statuas.” Renouard, who quotes this passage, remarks on it, “J’ignore si les exemplaires demandés par Muret ont été tirés, mais on voit par cette lettre que la fantaisie de grand papier a été de tous les temps, et que même de bons esprits ne la dédaignoient pas.”<sup>1</sup>

Joseph Scaliger, who disliked Muretus, neglected his edition, and despised his emendations. He returned to the text of the *first* Aldine edition, made a few bold innovations of his own, and, in the collocation of some verses, particularly of the first elegy, he followed the arrangement of a MS. in which he placed great confidence, and which had been presented to him by the celebrated jurisconsult Cujacius. Hence many of the errors and corruptions, which had been rectified by Muretus, reappeared in the edition of Scaliger, which was first printed at Paris in 1577.

Tibullus was again edited by Janus Dousa, along with Catullus and Propertius, and printed at Leyden in 1592. Heinsius and Bar-

<sup>1</sup> *L’Imprim. des Aldes*, T. I. p. 305.

thius were both of opinion, that this was the most correct and improved edition of these poets which had as yet appeared.

I am not aware of any edition of importance, in which the works of Tibullus were published separately during the 17th century; but they were printed along with the two other elegiac poets at Paris, in 1604, under the care of Morell, with a copious selection of annotations; and in the *Variorum* edition of Grævius, in 1680, and in the *Delphin*, in 1685, which is by no means one of the best of the class to which it belongs.

In the commencement of the following century the celebrated Dutch commentator, Broukhusius, edited Tibullus apart from Propertius and Catullus. For this work, published at Amsterdam in 1708, he had a considerable apparatus of old editions, MSS., and various readings of MSS. extracted by Justius Lipsius, and other illustrious scholars. In the text, he chiefly adopted that of Scaliger, being like him a bold editor, and not very scrupulous observer of the faith due to MSS. But his annotations are highly useful and valuable, and of a different description from those which had as yet accompanied the impressions of Tibullus. The ancient commentators on that poet, as, indeed, was suitable in the early ages of the revival of classical literature, had been chiefly philologists, and at most had only displayed their erudition in the history of a heathen god, or the topography of a river or mountain. But this editor, though his chief care lay in arranging the text, and selecting the readings of which he most approved, has, in his commentary, entered deeply into the history of ancient customs and manners, and sometimes into the propriety and beauty of the thoughts of his author.

The first edition of Vulpus (Padua, 1710) was the fruit of his earliest youth, and was published before he had seen that of Broukhusius. His second edition (Padua, 1749) is greatly improved, and is, in every respect, a suitable companion for his other volumes, in which he has edited Catullus and Propertius with such success. In his commentary, he has introduced a new and agreeable species of criticism, by pointing out those passages which Tibullus had borrowed from preceding poets, or which the moderns had imitated from him. More scrupulous than Scaliger or Broukhusius, he paid much deference to ancient MSS.; and he was the first editor, who, since



the close of the 15th century, had inspected the *Editio Princeps* of Tibullus. He has thus in many places restored the more ancient and authoritative readings ; and in some of the elegies, he has presented us with an arrangement of lines and distichs, so totally different from the order adopted by Broukhusius, that one might be inclined to think Tibullus was a poet, whose works, as some person has said of the poems of Ossian, made equally good sense when read backwards as forward. As an example of this, I may cite some lines of the edition of Broukhusius, and the corresponding verses of that of Vulpus ; and I shall quote from the first elegy of the first book, in which the greatest latitude had been left for conjecture, owing to the original MS. of Tibullus having been almost illegible near the commencement.

## BROUKHUSIUS.

Divitias alius fulvo sibi congerat auro,  
 Et teneat culti jugera multa soli.  
 Me mea paupertas vitæ traducat inerti,  
 Dum meus assiduo luceat igne focus :  
 Nec Spes destituat, sed frugum semper acervos  
 Præbeat, et pleno pinguis musta lacu.  
 Ipse seram teneras maturo tempore vites  
 Rusticus, et facili grandia poma manu.  
 Nec tamen interdum pudeat tenuisse bidentem,  
 Aut stimulo tardos increpuisse boves.  
 Non agnamve sinu pigeat, fœtumve capellæ  
 Desertum oblitâ matre, referre domum.  
 Hic ego pastoremque meum lustrare quotannis,  
 Et placidam soleo spargere lacte Palem.  
 Nam veneror, seu stipes habet desertus in agris,  
 Seu vetus in trivio florea sarta lapis :  
 Et quodcumque mihi pomum novus educat annus,  
 Libatum agricolæ ponitur ante deo.  
 Flava Ceres, tibi sit nostro de rure corona  
 Spicea, quæ templi pendeat ante fores.  
 Pomosisque ruber custos ponatur in hortis,  
 Terreat ut sævâ falce Priapus aves.  
 Vos quoque, felicitis quondam, nunc pauperis agri  
 Custodes, fertis munera vestra, Lares.  
 Tunc vitula innumeros lustrabat cæsa juvencos :  
 Nunc agna exigui est hostia magna soli.

Agna cadet vobis : quam circum rustica pubes  
 Clamet : Io messes, et bona vina date.  
 Adsitis, divi, neu vos de paupere mensâ  
 Dona, nec e puris spernite fictilibus.

## VULPIUS.

Divitias alius fulvo sibi congerat auro,  
 Et teneat culti jugera magna soli.  
 Quem labor assiduus vicino terreat hoste,  
 Martia cui somnos classica pulsa fugent.  
 Me mea paupertas vitæ traducat inerti,  
 Dum meus assiduo luceat igne focus.  
 Ipse seram teneras maturo tempore vites  
 Rusticus, et facili grandia poma manu.  
 Nec Spes destituat, sed frugum semper acervos  
 Præbeat, et pleno pinguis musta lacu.  
 Nam veneror, seu stipes habet desertus in agris,  
 Seu vetus in trivio florea sarta lapis.  
 Et quodcumque mihi pomum novus educat annus,  
 Libatum agricolæ ponitur ante deo.  
 Flava Ceres, tibi sit nostro de rure corona  
 Spicea, quæ templi pendeat ante fores.  
 Pomosisque ruber custos ponatur in hortis,  
 Terreat ut sævâ falce Priapus aves.  
 Vos quoque felices quondam, nunc pauperis horti,  
 Custodes, fertis munera vestra, Lares.  
 Tunc vitula innumeros lustrabat cæsa juvencos :  
 Nunc agna exigui est hostia magna soli.  
 Agna cadet vobis, quam circum rustica pubes  
 Clamet : Io messes, et bona vina date.  
 Jam modo non possum contentus vivere parvo,  
 Nec semper longæ deditus esse viæ :  
 Sed Canis æstivos ortus vitare sub umbrâ  
 Arboris, ad rivos prætereuntis aquæ.  
 Nec tamen interdum pudeat tenuisse bidentem,  
 Aut stimulo tardos increpuisse boves.  
 Non agnamve sinu pigeat, fœtumve capellæ  
 Desertum oblitâ matre, referre domum.  
 At vos exiguo pecori, furesque, lupique,  
 Parcite : de magno præda petenda grege est.  
 Hic ego pastoremque meum lustrare quotannis,  
 Et placidam soleo spargere lacte Palem.  
 Adsitis, Divi ; neu vos e paupere mensâ  
 Dona, nec e puris spernite fictilibus.

In attempting to compare the propriety of the arrangements of these two editors, one becomes too much perplexed to be able to form an opinion of their respective merits.

The text of Vulpius has been chiefly followed by Heyne in his celebrated editions. Tibullus was the earliest care of that distinguished commentator, and the task of editing this author gave the tenor to his whole life. “*Ex eâ operâ,*” says he, in the preface to the third edition, “*quam aliquando necessitatibus adactus, in hoc poetâ posueram, omnis vitæ meæ ratio ducta.*” The first edition, which appeared at Leipsic as early as 1755, is coarsely printed, and full of typographical errors. But the subsequent editions, 1777 and 1798, are in every respect greatly improved. “The second edition,” says Dibdin, “is one of the most admirably edited books in the world: the labours of Broukhusius and Vulpius have been carefully consulted and judiciously selected; and the text, which in the first edition was chiefly taken from Vulpius, is adopted according to the editor’s own judgment and sagacity. This second edition has also the advantage of containing some readings from a very scarce and almost unknown edition—‘*ex codice Corvini regis curata.*’ In short, whether we consider the erudition of the preface, the purity of the text, or the taste, learning, and research displayed in the notes, we shall not hesitate in giving it the decided preference to every previous edition of Tibullus. Harwood calls it a faultless book. The third edition is still an improvement on the preceding ones, as containing, besides other emendations, the readings of four MSS. in *Biblioth. Guelfer.*” There has been yet a fourth edition, printed at Leipsic, 1817, 2 tom. 8vo. The charge of it was committed by Heyne, in his old age, to Wunderlichius; and this scholar having died when only a small part of the work had been printed, and when the remainder was not fully prepared for the press, Huschkius undertook to complete it; but as he delayed to perform the task, it was at length intrusted to L. Dessenius, a professor of Göttingen. This fourth edition, which may now be considered as the most perfect, gives us the prefaces to all the former editions of Heyne, an account of MSS. and preceding editions, and Ayrmann’s Chronological Life of Tibullus. The first volume, besides the Prolegomena, contains the text and some notes; and the second volume is chiefly occupied with more



full annotations, by Heyne and Wunderlichius. Voss, so well known as the German translator of Virgil, and who had likewise translated Tibullus, published, in 1811, a Latin edition of our poet, accompanied by a German preface and commentary, with a view to prove, that Lygdamus was the author of the third book of Elegies, which are usually attributed to Tibullus, and have been published in all the editions of his works.

There have been but few versions of Tibullus in the modern languages of Europe. One in Italian, by the Doctor Guido Riviera, is inserted in the *Raccolta* of translations from the Latin classics published at Milan, 1740, and another, more recent, by Peruzzi, has been printed at Venice, 1798.

La Chapelle, in his romance entitled *Les Amours de Tibulle*, which appeared towards the close of the 17th century, introduced free translations into French verse of all the elegies of Tibullus. This sort of historical novel, where the loves of the poets of antiquity which they had hinted at, or described in their writings, are lengthened out into a continued story, was at this period much in vogue in France. Another work of the same description as that of La Chapelle, and in which the elegies of Tibullus have been freely translated, is the *Vie de Tibulle, tirée de ses écrits*, Paris, 1743, by Gillet de Moyvre. The author adds, however, and omits so much, and transposes so many passages at pleasure, that his poems may rather be considered as imitations than translations of the original. Almost all the elegies of Tibullus have been versified by M. de Guys, and published in the fourth and last volume of his work, *Voyage Littéraire de la Grèce* (Paris, 1783). His translations, like the preceding, are unfaithful and diffuse, and their ambitious ornaments are altogether remote from the artless language of the original. Thus, Tibullus says to his mistress, with equal simplicity and tenderness,—

Ferreus ille fuit, qui, te cùm posset habere,  
Maluerit prædas stultus et arma sequi.

Which De Guys thus affectedly renders :—

Mais, dis moi quel mortel, quel Scythe a préféré  
Le laurier de Bellone à ce myrthe adoré,  
Dont l'Amour couronnoit le vainqueur de Delie ?

A translation of Tibullus was written by the Count de Mirabeau, while confined in the prison of Vincennes, and sent thence to his favourite mistress, Sophia Ruffey. The Count having been obliged to leave France, partly on account of his intrigue with this lady, who was the wife of the Marquis de Monnier, fled with her to Holland. He was given up, however, by the Government of that country, and, in consequence of a quarrel with his father, and his odious political principles, he was detained for three years in the castle of Vincennes. The version of Tibullus which he wrote in this confinement, and which is mixed up with the expression of his own feelings and sentiments, was printed in 1796. The most recent, and I believe the best, verse translation of Tibullus, (for I do not mention those in prose,) is that by Mollevaut, Paris, 1808.

It was long before any full translation of Tibullus appeared in English verse. One elegy was rendered by Otway, another by Sir William Temple, and some passages by Lord Lyttleton; but the first complete version in the English language, was that of Dart, (1720.) Grainger, a subsequent translator of Tibullus, speaks very unfavourably of this production of his predecessor. He says, that "Dart frequently misses the meaning of his author, and his poetry always escapes him;" and he finds so little of the tenderness of the Latin poet transfused into his verses, that he concludes "he was an utter stranger to that passion which gave rise to most of the elegies of Tibullus."

The translation by James Grainger, M. D., was begun and completed by him while he was in the army. He informs us, that "he at that time spent his leisure in perusing the classics, and as time and place contribute to our relish of particular writers, he readily sympathized, amid the horrors of war, with the poet's aversion to a military life, and doubly enjoyed, amid the tumults of a camp, his descriptions of the unruffled and tranquil scenes of Nature. And so far was he from that coldness and want of passion, to which he partly attributes the failure of his predecessor, that "every motive conspired to make him regard the fair sex as the chief ornaments of society." Those elegies which particularly pleased him, were first translated, and he afterwards completed as a task what he had commenced as an amusement. After his translation was finished,

but before it had been published, Dart's version was sent to him; but he nevertheless resolved to print his own, "that those who did not understand the original might not form their idea of the most exact, elegant, and harmonious of the Roman elegiac poets from the most inaccurate, harsh, and inelegant verses of the present century."

Grainger has translated most of the elegies into the heroic measure, which he conceived to be "not better suited to the lofty sound of the Epic Muse, than to the complaining tone of elegy." The quatrain, or stanza of alternate rhymes, he in general rejected; for the sense naturally ending at the fourth line, he thought he could not adopt it without violence to the original. That stanza is generally supposed to possess a kind of solemnity, and melancholy flow of numbers, well suited to the elegiac strain; and it has long been appropriated to the plaintive tone of the English elegy. It has accordingly been chosen by Hammond in his imitations of Tibullus. Dr Johnson, who, in his *Lives of the Poets*, speaks very harshly of Hammond, says,—“it is very difficult to tell why he or other writers have thought the quatrain of ten syllables elegiac. The character of the elegy is gentleness and tenuity; but this stanza has been pronounced by Dryden, whose knowledge of English metre was not inconsiderable, to be the most magnificent of all the measures which our language affords.”

#### PROPERTIUS.

The works of most of those Augustan writers which are still extant were, as we have seen, well known during the Middle Ages: but the elegies of Propertius are perhaps an exception, and may be considered as having been discovered at the revival of literature. They were found, about the middle of the fifteenth century, concealed under a cask in a wine cellar near Naples. The MS. was very ancient, and the letters in some places obliterated. Alexander ab Alexandro, (who was a Neapolitan lawyer of the fifteenth century, and nearly contemporary with Pontanus,) in his *Dies Geniales*, introduces Sannazzarius relating this history of the discovery of Propertius, on the authority of Pontanus:—"Jovianus Pontanus,



vir multæ eruditionis, antiquissimo firmabat testimonio, Propertii elegias patrum nostrûm ætate, et se adolescentulo, primûm in lucem prodiisse, cûm antea, inscitâ temporum, incompetæ forent et incognitæ: opusque oblitteratum et longissimo ævo absumptum, corrosis et labentibus litteris, in cellâ vinariâ, sub doliis, inventum apparuisse; et cûm libelli vetustate, verbis et monumentis absumptis longo situ et senio, quòd in diurnâ obscuritate latuerant, veram lectionem assequi nequirent, effectum ut mendosi inde codices prodirent: paulatimque discuti errores et corrigi cœpti sunt: nec tamen effici quisse, ut posteris omnino integri inoffensique darentur Ad hunc modum Actius Syncerus (Sannazzarius) noster scitè admodum, apud complusculos qui aderamus, sermocinabatur.”<sup>1</sup>

Pontanus employed himself in the correction of the text of Propertius soon after the MS. was discovered; but from the state in which it was found, he was tempted to hazard many rash innovations and conjectures; and after all, he left much that was imperfect and unintelligible.<sup>2</sup>

The errors of the earliest *Codices* would, of course, creep into the first editions of Propertius—especially as he is an author somewhat difficult to be understood, and full of historical and mythological allusions, which must have been perfect enigmas at that remote period. His elegies, too, are full of Grecisms, drawn from expressions of the Alexandrian poets, which, being different from ordinary Latin phraseology, were believed to be corrupt, and, as such, were corrected by those who were ignorant of the sources from which they had flowed. Many examples of this are given by Huschke, in his *Epist. Critica in Propertium*. Amst. 1792.

The first publication of Propertius was in the *Editio Princeps* of 1472, along with Catullus and Tibullus. The most important editions in which Propertius appeared together with these poets, have been already mentioned while enumerating the different impressions of Tibullus. There are several valuable and important editions, however, in which Propertius has been published separately. One, which is now extremely rare, is supposed to have been printed in 1473, by Ferrandus, at Brescia. Propertius was also edited by Broukhuisius, and by Vulpius, in the same style and manner, though separately,

<sup>1</sup> *Dies Geniales*, Lib. II. c. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Lachmann, *Præf. ad. edit. Propert.* p. 7.

in which they had both so successfully published Tibullus. Barthius, in his edition, Leipsic, 1777, took Heyne's Tibullus as his model. The text, which was amended with considerable care and accuracy, is illustrated with various readings, and a commentary, of which the chief value consists in a diligent exhibition of those passages of the Greek poets, particularly the epigrammatic and lyric, which have been imitated by Propertius; and there are prefixed to it a critical account of MSS. and preceding editions, the Life of Propertius by Vulpius, and also a chronological life of the poet, drawn up by the editor himself. Burman's edition, 1780, was revised and superintended at the press by Santenius—Burman himself having died before its completion. It is generally considered as the most learned and accurate of Propertius. "After reading," says Dibdin, "what has been remarked on this admirable and truly critical edition by Harles, and the Biblioth. Critic. Amsterdam, I may venture to pronounce it by far the best edition of Propertius yet published. The text is formed on Broukhusius' edition; and the commentary of Burman is a treasure of critical and philological learning. Besides *excerpta* from ten MSS., the notes of Heinsius, and much valuable information from some libraries never before explored, this work presents us with the edited and unpublished notes of almost every learned man who has written in illustration of the poet; and some of Burman's corrections and emendations of passages usually received as legitimate, are as happy as they are acute. The student and collector will, therefore, consider this edition as one of the brightest ornaments of his library." Dibdin also writes favourably of Kuinoel's edition, (Leipsic, 1805,) but German critics and bibliographers have not the same opinion of its merits. Fuhrman speaks slightly of its editor; and Klügling remarks,—"*malè explevit editor hanc suam editionem virorum doctorum expectationes ac desideria. Textum quidem sic constituit, ut eum, temere recipiendis falsis lectionibus, suisque et aliorum conjecturis vanis plerumque et absonis, miserè potius interpolaret, quàm emendaret vel corrigeret. Commentarius qui ex editoris voluntate rerum verborumque difficultates omnes removeat, partim ex Burmanniano, quem tomo posteriori integrum addidit, partim ex suis aliorumque notis, hinc illinc depromptis, consistit; atque et ipse tam parum satisfecit doctorum arbitrorum postulationibus, ut eorum de illo palam latis sententiis*

nostrum addere iudicium supervacuum videatur." A more recent edition by Lachmann, Leipsic, 1816, is much better esteemed on the Continent. It is professedly confined, however, to verbal criticism and emendations of the text. Burman's readings are usually adopted, and the editor points out in the notes where he has departed from them.

There is no eminent classical poet of whom so few translations exist as of Propertius. Catullus and Tibullus are the poets of all ages; but the popularity of Propertius could not be so great in periods when his abstruse and mythological fables were unknown to many, and credited by none. There are, however, two translations of all his elegies in Italian, one by Giulio Cesare Becelli, in *Terza Rima*, (Verona, 1742,) and the other in *Versi Sciolti*, by Guido Riviera, published in the *Raccolta*, which I have so frequently mentioned.

No complete translation of Propertius in verse had appeared in France when Goujet published his *Bibliothèque Française* in the middle of the eighteenth century. Since that time, there have been several in prose, and a very recent one in verse by Barron (Paris, 1812).

It seems to be uncertain if there be any complete translation of Propertius extant in the English language. A recent anonymous translator of the first book of elegies mentions, that he had been told "there did appear, some hundred years ago, a translation of Propertius by one Diamond;" he, however, adds, "That he had never been fortunate enough to meet with an exemplar of this book; but it must be extremely valuable on account of its scarcity, not, as we may readily conceive, from the elegance of the version."

#### OVID.

It has been doubted whether the edition of Ovid, printed at Bologna in 1471 by Azzoguidi, or that published in the same year at Rome by Sweynheim and Pannartz, is entitled to be considered as the *Editio Princeps*. On the whole, however, it seems to be agreed among most bibliographers, that the printing of these two



editions commenced nearly at the same time, but that the Bologna impression was first completed, and first issued from the press. The Roman edition was edited by Andrea, Bishop of Aleria, under whose care so many of the *Editiones Principes* of the classics were ushered into the world. He has prefixed to this work an address to the Pope in behalf of its unfortunate printers, Sweynheim and Pannartz, who—strong as the reviving taste was for classical productions—seem greatly to have over-rated it. The epistle contains a catalogue of all the books which at that date had been published by Sweynheim and Pannartz. “The total of the volumes,” says the bishop, “amounts to 12,475—a prodigious heap, and, by reason of those unsold, intolerable to us your holiness’s printers. Our house, otherwise spacious enough, is full of quire-books, but void of every necessary of life.”

Editions of the whole works of Ovid followed these two *Editiones Principes* in quick succession. Those of Venice, 1474—Parma, 1477—and Milan, 1477, printed by Zarotus, are all excellent editions, and are now extremely scarce and valuable. There were two impressions of Ovid published at the press of Aldus, in the beginning of the sixteenth century. Of the first of these (Venice, 1502) Aldus himself was the sole editor, and it is admitted that he has produced a text uncommonly accurate and pure. The second edition, however, is considered as still better, having been carefully revised and corrected by that elegant Latin poet, Navagero, who had the assistance of some MSS. which had not previously been employed.

Daniel Heinsius published an edition in 1629, which was printed by the Elzevirs. It formed the basis of a much improved edition by his son Nicholas Heinsius, printed at Amsterdam in 1661. Ernesti bears testimony to the pains which Heinsius took in the preparation of this edition,—“N. Heinsius verus Ovidii sospitator, multis antiquis libris, per opportunitatem itinerum per omnes cultoris Europæ partes, collatis, textum accuratè correxit, additis notis eximiis.” The publication was, in consequence, expected with the utmost anxiety by the numerous scholars who were contemporary with Heinsius, many of whom have left, in the letters addressed to him, published by Burman, testimonies of that impatience with which they expected the work of a critic so distinguished for sound judgment and extensive erudition. When it at length appeared,

after having been long delayed by quarrels among the booksellers, it was hailed with the highest eulogies by the eminent scholars of the age. "Juro tibi," says Grævius, in a letter to the editor, "te omnium spem et expectationem vicisse longè. Nec enim quisquam est, qui de his studiis rectè possunt existimare, quos ego quidem novi, qui non divinitatem hujus editionis agnoscant, et magnopere prædicent: Rapuisti in stupore omnes." The text of this great work of Heinsius served as the basis for what are commonly called the *Variorum Ovids*, which were edited by Cnippingius, and printed at Leyden, 1670, and at Amsterdam, in 1702; as also for the celebrated edition of Burman, which is considered as one of the best and most accurate of the Dutch classics, and the *chef-d'œuvre* of its editor. He was much harassed, and the publication of the work was hurried on, by the importunities of the booksellers. "Notwithstanding a few imperfections," says Dibdin, "this beautiful and erudite performance may be considered as the *editio longè præstantissima* of Ovid: its various readings, sagacious criticisms, and judicious selection of the most valuable parts of ancient editions, render it a work almost indispensably necessary to those students who wish to enter minutely into the beauties and illustrations of the poet." Harles, however, at the time when he wrote, considered that there had been no perfect edition of Ovid; and he expresses himself as not much satisfied with the work of Burman, or any prior edition: "Futuro denique editori multa supersunt in Ovidio, cum nondum satis curata et emendata, tum in primis minus rectè intellecta atque explicita: id quod præcipuè accidit libris *Fastorum* atque *Metamorphoseon*. Plerumque grammatici et critici, gemmarum, reliquorumque monumentorum, artisque ipsius inscii aut non curiosi, explicuerunt illos. Alii, dum emendaturi erant, sæpe vitiârunt verba. Ovidius enim, Astrologiæ scientissimus, sæpe vel alludendo ad illam, vel copiosiore oratione intexit poematibus, et declaravit illius peritiam. Plurimi autem interpretum, istius ignari, illa loca vel malè intellexerunt, ac vitium odorari sibi visi, sana integraque crisi corruerunt temerariâ, vel intellectu difficiliora dimiserunt intacta: cujus utriusque peccati exempla in editione Burmannianâ plura possunt passim reperiri."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Litt. Roman.* II. p. 450.

I do not think that, since this passage was written, any edition of Ovid has appeared to remedy the defects of which it complains. There have, however, been some recent editions in Germany of separate parts of the works of Ovid, which bear a high character, particularly Gierig's edition of the *Metamorphoses*, 1804, Leipsic, and of the *Fasti*, 1814.

It would be tedious to enumerate the Italian versions of the different works of Ovid. Several portions of his writings were translated long before the invention of printing, which, of itself, shows that Ovid never had been lost, and that MSS. of his poems were not uncommon in the Dark Ages. In 1375, the *Metamorphoses* were translated in prose by Gio. Buonsignore, and the *Heroids* in *Ottava Rima* about the year 1350, by Domenico de Montechiello, a doctor of laws in the territory of Sienna.<sup>1</sup> The translation of the *Heroids* by Carlo Figiovanni, a citizen of Florence, must also have been made previous to the invention of printing; for, in a letter addressed to his friends, Andrea and Giovambattista Rossi, and long afterwards inserted in an edition of his version printed in the 16th century, he informs them, that in his younger days he often visited a property which he possessed at Certaldo in the neighbourhood of the residence of Boccaccio, who was then tranquilly passing the close of life at the place of his birth: That with his assistance he had composed and translated many things, like other young men, rather as literary exercises, than with any other object, and among these were the heroic epistles of Ovid. Now, Boccaccio died in the year 1375; and from this letter it appears that the translation was completed previous to his decease. Subsequently to the invention of printing, the *Metamorphoses* were translated by Niccolo Agostini and Lodovico Dolce, into *Ottava Rima*. The last translation, or rather paraphrase, though severely censured by Ruccellai, was very popular, and went through six editions in a few years. But both began to be forgotten soon after the appearance, in 1561, of the celebrated version of Anguillara, which is also in *Ottava Rima*. This is one of the best translations of the Latin classics in the Italian tongue, and ranks equally high with the *Æneid* of Annibal Caro, and the Lu-

<sup>1</sup> Bettinelli, *Risorgimento d'Italia*.



cretius of Marchetti. It is a work of great poetical merit—being distinguished for its freedom and grace, and fine versification. But it is generally considered as too paraphrastic. Crescimbeni calls it a translation, “coll ornamento di varie nobilissime giunte;”<sup>1</sup> and Tiraboschi says, “L’Anguillara agevolossi la strada a render più plausibile la sua versione colla liberta che si prese di agguignere e di togliere all’ originale ciò che meglio gli parve; e presso alcuni ottene ancora maggior grazia, perchè in certi argomenti si stese più ancora che non conveniva.”<sup>2</sup> Sometimes, indeed, Anguillara takes a sentiment of his author as a theme on which to enlarge, and presents it to the reader in every point of view. Thus, in the story of Pyramus and Thisbe, the simple ideas announced in the two following lines,

Tempore crevit amor: tædæ quoque jure coissent;  
Sed vetuere patres quod non potuere vetare,—

are converted into a paraphrase on early love, and the cruelty of parents, which is continued through five stanzas of octaves, and is as beautiful in its composition as it is unbounded in the license of its amplification. So popular was this translation, that it passed through fifteen editions before the close of the century in which it appeared, and the same number in the following century. Its popularity, however, did not prevent Maretta from attempting a new version of the *Metamorphoses* in *Ottava Rima*, which was published at Venice in 1570, and which, though inferior in freedom and eloquence to that of Anguillara, is much more faithful to the original. There are two very recent versions of the *Metamorphoses*, one by Bondi, 1807, and the other by Giuseppe Solari, Genoa, 1818.

Of the translations of the other works of Ovid, I shall only enumerate those which are mentioned by Tiraboschi, as the best of each—That of the *Heroids* in *Versi Sciolti*, by Fra. Remigio Nannini, of which Paitoni enumerates sixteen different editions, the first being at Venice, 1555. This writer mentions not fewer than nine other translations of the *Heroids* in Italian. The best version of the *Remedia Amoris*, is that by Angiolo Ingegneri, in *Ottava Rima*, Avignon, 1576. There is an excellent translation of the *Fasti*, by Vincenzo Cartari Regiano, in *Versi Sciolti*, (Venice,

<sup>1</sup> *Storia della Volgar Poesia*, T. II. p. 334.

<sup>2</sup> Tiraboschi, *Storia della Letter. Ital.* Tom. VII. Parte 3. Lib. 3. c. 3.

1551,) and of the *Tristia*, also in *Versi Sciolti*, by Giulio Morigi (Ravenna, 1581). The only Italian translation of the amatory elegies of Ovid is that by Giuseppe Baretta, so well known in this country, as the author of the *Travels in Spain*, and the friend of Dr Johnson.

Marot, the Father of French poetry, attempted to translate the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid in verse; and having completed the first book, he had the honour of reading it to his patron Francis I. in the Castle of Amboise. The entertainment which the king received from it, encouraged him to proceed, but he advanced no farther than the end of the second book. Scevole de Sainte Marthe, Baif, and other poets, who were contemporary with Marot, translated other parts of the *Metamorphoses*; but the first complete version of the whole fifteen books was by F. Habert, who undertook it by desire of Henry II., and when it was completed, dedicated the work to that monarch. The translation was extremely rude and inaccurate, and gave no great satisfaction either to the public or his royal patron. About twenty years afterwards, Raymond and Charles Massac, a father and son, who also wrote under the patronage of their sovereign, commenced a new version of the *Metamorphoses*. Raymond de Massac being with Henry III. during the last stay that he made at Orleans, that prince, among other topics of conversation in which he engaged with his courtiers, spoke of the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid, and expressed his regret at not seeing them in good French poetry, as there was no work either of the Greeks or Latins which better merited a suitable translation. This discourse roused the literary ambition of Raymond, and though Henry was soon afterwards assassinated, he was supported in his exertions by the desire of pleasing his successor. Raymond, however, died before he had completed his task, which was taken up by his son Charles; and the work was at length published by him in 1617, with a dedication to Louis XIII. M. Benserade, a writer, who, by his ballets and bon-mots, obtained great vogue at the French court during the regency of Anne of Austria, and the early years of Louis XIV., translated the whole *Metamorphoses* into French *rondeaux*, which became the subject of epigrams and satires, by Chaulieu, Chapelle, and other wits of the time.

Thomas Corneille, the brother of the great Corneille, and himself a tragic writer of considerable eminence, published, in 1697, a version which greatly surpassed that of Massac, and all preceding attempts. There have also been several recent translations of the *Metamorphoses* in verse, as that by M. de Saint Ange, Paris, 1800. The French likewise possess many translations of the *Metamorphoses* in prose; but I shall only mention that by the Abbé Banier, which was published about the middle of last century, and has become highly celebrated, not so much as a translation, as on account of the learned and ingenious illustrations of mythology which it everywhere exhibits. He had studied ancient history and fable for thirty years before he undertook this work, in which he has divested Ovid's fables of the allegorical signification attributed to them by his predecessors, and has explained them all as records of events which occurred in the early world.

The French translations of the other works of Ovid are little deserving of notice. Octavien de Saint Gelais, F. Habert, and the Abbé Marolles, who busied themselves so much with versions from the classics, had given, at an early period, rude and flat translations of the *Heroids*, *Amatory Elegies*, and *Fasti*. Of this last-mentioned poem, there is also a well-known prose translation by M. Bayeux, (Paris, 1783, 4 tom. Rouen, 1788,) executed on the plan of Banier's interpretation of the *Metamorphoses*, and containing preliminary dissertations and notes, illustrative of the Roman calendar, and religious observances of the ancients. The work is stored with erudition; but in explaining the system of the Roman religion, the author indulges too much in hypotheses.

Among the English translators of Ovid, we find some of the most eminent names in the history of our poetry. The earliest translation, however, of the *Metamorphoses* was in prose. It was done by Caxton out of some of the old French versions, and printed by him in 1480. The first complete translation of the *Metamorphoses*, in metre, is that by Arthur Golding, printed in 1567, and addressed to the Earl of Leicester, in a long epistle in Alexandrine verse. This work was nearly coëval with Phaer's Virgil; it is in the same sort of measure, but is, on the whole, much better executed. Pope thought it a pretty good translation, considering the time when it



was written.<sup>1</sup> About half a century afterwards, Sandys rendered the first five books of the *Metamorphoses* into English verse. This writer, whom Dryden calls the best versifier of the age in which he lived, was Gentleman of the Chamber to Charles I., and intimately acquainted with the celebrated Lord Falkland. His translation is in heroic verse; and, though the sense of one couplet frequently runs into the next, and though he has generally attempted to render line for line, yet, by adapting his expression to the idiom of the language in which he wrote, instead of retaining the Latin phraseology, he has bestowed on his version an ease of expression, and harmony of numbers, which bring it much nearer to original composition than the confined and Latinized translations of most of his predecessors. Sandys obtained high reputation by this production, which went through a number of editions, and continued in vogue till the beginning of the following century, when Garth published his *Metamorphoses* of Ovid, collected from the versions of Dryden, Pope, Addison, Congreve, and Gay. Since that period, there have been no English translations of the *Metamorphoses* of any merit or importance whatever.

The other works of Ovid were translated by writers of high name in the early periods of English poetry. Gower translated the *Fasti*: in the reign of Elizabeth, Churchyard versified the *Tristia*, and Christopher Marlow the *Elegies*, which were burned at Stationers' Hall by order of the Archbishop of Canterbury; and translations of the epistles of Helen to Paris, and of Paris to Helen, appear in the collections of Shakspeare's poems. The *Heroids* were translated by Tuberville in the age of Queen Elizabeth, and likewise by Francis Quarles in the time of Charles II.: in that reign also, several poets joined to furnish a complete translation of the *Heroids*. Among these were Otway, Duke, Elkanah Settle, Sir Carr Scrope, and the Earl of Mulgrave. Dryden, who had contributed Helen to Paris, and Dido to Æneas, was applied to for a preface. He accordingly prefixed a discourse on translation, which was then struggling for the liberty it now enjoys; and, in promulgating its laws, while he protested against mere imitation, and against all change in the sense of the author, he warmly supported that freedom of which

<sup>1</sup> Spence's *Anecdotes*, p. 87.

he had himself supplied so many admirable examples, and which Roscommon had enforced by precept in his poetical *Essay on Translated Verse*. "Why translation," says Johnson, "should have found any difficulty in breaking the shackles of verbal interpretation, which must for ever debar it from elegance, it would be difficult to conjecture, were not the power of prejudice every day observed. The authority of Jonson, Sandys, and Holiday, had fixed the judgment of the nation; and it was not easily believed that a better way could be found than they had, though Denham, Waller, and Cowley, had tried to give examples of a different practice." A tolerable version of twelve of the *Epistles*, by the Rev. Mr Fitzthomas, was published in 1807, with an introduction, in which Dryden's discourse on the principles of translation has been minutely examined.

#### LIVY.

The works of the poets of the Augustan age have been better preserved than those of its prose writers. The minor poets, indeed, have been lost: but we possess all that is certainly known to have been written by Virgil, Horace, and Ovid; while Livy and Cornelius Nepos, like Sallust before them, and Tacitus after them, have descended to us only in fragments. By appealing to sentiments which are universal, the works of the poet interest every age and country; but the histories of distant times and foreign lands being valued chiefly by scholars, the ancient copies of them are less diligently preserved, and soon cease to be multiplied. For some centuries after the fall of the western empire, Italy was possessed by barbarians, who were all hostile to the Roman name, and who would little relish those works, which, like the *Decades* of Livy, were avowedly written as monuments to its glory. The history, too, of Livy was so immense, that it must have equally tired the hand and the patience of a copyist; and being bound up in consequence of its size in separate volumes, it naturally happened that some parts were lost, while others were preserved. Pope Gregory the Great is also said to have burned all the copies of Livy on which he could lay

his hands, on account of the superstitious pagan legends with which the Roman historian abounded.

Some part of Livy was known during the Dark Ages, and he is repeatedly cited by William of Malmesbury. Petrarch was possessed of a MS. containing at least some part of Livy. Cristoforo Landini, however, has been considered as the discoverer of this historian; and he brought to light, and multiplied, the copies of all that portion of Livy which we yet possess, except the first five books of the fifth *Decade*, which were discovered in 1531, by Simon Grynæus, in the extensive library of the convent called Lorsch, near Worms, which was founded by Charlemagne. Antonio Beccatelli, secretary to the King of Naples, is said to have purchased from Poggio, in the year 1455, a beautiful MS. of Livy, and to have given a farm as the price of this literary treasure. But had this MS. comprehended the whole of Livy, and had such a valuable possession been in the hands of Poggio, copies of it would have, in all probability, been so multiplied, that it would not utterly have perished.

Leo X. entertained great hopes of recovering this historian, and exerted all his power and influence in promoting the search. An entire copy is said to have been extant in 1631 at Magdeburgh, and to have been destroyed in the plunder of that city. The *Decades* of Livy were long supposed to be in the celebrated monastery of Mount Athos, to which all the most valuable MSS. had been conveyed from Constantinople, previous to its capture by the Turks. During the administration of Colbert, some literary men were sent from Paris to this convent, in the disguise of Eastern merchants; but the monks possessed no such treasure, for, if they had, a small reward would doubtless have procured it. Again, the *Decades* were supposed to be in the seraglio of the Grand Seignior. In the year 1615, it was said to contain a Livy with all the *Decades* complete. The Grand Duke of Tuscany offered 5000 piastres for it, which was refused. The French ambassador, Achille de Harlay, offered to the librarian 10,000 crowns for the book, which was bargained for at that sum, but the Livy unfortunately was gone, nobody knew whither, and a search was made for it in vain for several months.<sup>1</sup> Mr Soyer, as

<sup>1</sup> Pietro della Valle, *Itinerar.* Fabricius, *Bib. Lat. Lib.* I. c. 11.



quoted by Spence in his *Anecdotes*, says,—“ When there was a great fire in the seraglio at Constantinople, about fifty years ago, a great deal of the goods, and among the rest several books, were flung into the street. The secretary of the French ambassador then at the Porte happened to be walking that way ; and, as he was getting as well as he could through the street, he saw a man with a large folio, which he had opened, but could not tell what to make of it. The secretary saw it was a MS. of Livy, and on turning over the leaves a little farther, found that it had the second *Decade*, as well as the first, and probably might have all that was lost to us. He offered the man a handsome reward, if he would keep the book under his long robe, and follow him with it to his lodgings ; the man agreed to it, and followed him ; but, the crowd and confusion increasing, they were separated, and so the secretary lost the recovery of so great a treasure as that would have been to the learned world.”

From time to time the public have been amused with various stories concerning the lost *Decades* of Livy being concealed in remote and obscure convents ; and also of parts of them having been seen on the covers of rackets, and tops of trunks. The epitomés of them which we still possess, are generally attributed to Florus.

The *Editio Princeps* of Livy, is that which was superintended by the Bishop of Aleria, and printed at Rome, in 1469. That of Drakenborch, Amsterdam, 1738, is usually accounted the best.

Livy was translated into Italian, as early as the year 1476. It was also rendered into that language in the following century, by Nardi, well known as the author of a history of Florence. There are various other versions, of which the latest was printed at Brescia, 1804-16.

The best English translation is that of Baker, London, 1797.

#### CORNELIUS NEPOS.

The works of this author, which, in the early editions, were published under the name of Æmilius Probus, were first printed by Jenson, at Venice, in 1471. None of the subsequent editions of the fifteenth century are much esteemed. The Aldine impression (Ve-

nice, 1522) is generally considered as much more correct than any which appeared at the end of the fifteenth, or commencement of the sixteenth, century. Longolius, in his edition (Cologne, 1543) employed an ancient MS., and the *Editio Princeps*, for the emendation of the text. The historical and critical notes which he has appended are highly valuable, and have afforded much light to subsequent scholars. All preceding editions, however, were eclipsed by the Nepos of that learned and sagacious, though somewhat bold, editor, Lambinus, who first restored the name of the real author, which had been displaced for that of Æmilius Probus. This edition was printed at Paris, 1569, accompanied by a commentary distinguished for the learning and critical acuteness which it exhibited. The edition of Lambinus was the foundation of most others of eminence, the text of Bœclers (Argent, 1648) having been chiefly formed on it, while that of Bosius (Leipsic, 1657, Jenæ, 1675) was formed on Bœclers; and that of Van Staveren, (Leyden, 1734, 1773,) Heusinger, (Leipsic, 1747, 1755,) and Fischer, (Leipsic, 1759, 1768,) were in turn founded on Bosius. Each of these successive editors, however, made improvements and alterations in the text, from the collation of MSS.; and added commentaries, sometimes treating of the fidelity of the readings they adopted, and sometimes of the force or meaning of words and passages. This edition of Fischer was again printed in 1806, under the superintendence of Harles. He has introduced, however, from the authority of MSS., several readings, preferable to those of Bosius. The notes of Bosius are reprinted; and a few annotations taken from an autograph of Fischer, as also a number, supplied by the new editor, have been added for the farther illustration of this edition.

Schmeidir's edition, Berlin, 1801, contains the text of Heusinger much amended, and a very judicious selection of the best notes of former editions. Prefixed to each life is a short *excursus*, which greatly elucidates the biographical subject of the author. It contains also a map and geographical index.

The edition of Tzschucke, Göttingen, 1804, is formed on that of Van Staveren, the text of which, however, has been frequently corrected; but the editor has made some strange and affected innovations in orthography, which the learned have not in general

approved. Many new readings are proposed, or old ones confirmed; and the general subject, as well as several obscure passages, are frequently illustrated. This edition forms the fourth volume of the series of the Roman classical authors published at Göttingen. "It is," says Mr Dibdin, "an indifferently printed, but most judiciously edited impression, and was executed at the suggestion of Ruperti, on the plan of his Juvenal."<sup>1</sup> It ought to be accompanied with the following commentary, published at the same time, and of the same size, entitled, "*Commentarius perpetuus in C. Nepotis Excellentium Imperatorum Vitas, conscriptus a C. H. Tzschucke.*" In this commentary, the author discusses the point concerning the age in which Nepos lived; he discourses concerning his life and writings,—the controversy as to the real author of the *Vitæ Imperatorum*,—the historical sources of these biographies,—the MSS. of them, and previous editions.

Klügling, in his Supplement, has given a very full, and, on the whole, a favourable review of Paufler's editions, printed at Leipsic, 1804 and 1816. They are not formed on the basis of any particular edition. They are accompanied with a variety of parallel passages from other authors, and with so full a commentary, that Klügling declares, "*vix quidquam desiderabis quod ad intelligendum Nepotem necessarium possit videri.*" The same writer calls the yet more recent edition by Breme, "*præclara editio.*"—"It is," says Moss, "a very excellent and valuable edition, founded on that of Van Staveren, which the editor has corrected. It is illustrated with a very useful commentary, intended not only for the use of students, but of those perfectly acquainted with the Latin language; he has not only elucidated the more intricate and subtle rules of syntax, but has explained the true force and meaning of each word."<sup>2</sup>

Cornelius Nepos was translated in Italian by Remigio Nannini a Florentine, in 1550, and by Alessandro Bandiera in 1743.

The best French version which has yet appeared is that by the Abbé Paul, printed at Paris, in 1781.

<sup>1</sup> *Introduction to the Greek and Latin Classics.* Vol. II. p. 249. 4th ed.

<sup>2</sup> *Manual of Classical Bibliography.* Vol. II. p. 322.



The Lives of Nepos were translated into English in 1684, "by several gentlemen of the university of Oxford," at the head of whom was Creech, the translator of Lucretius. This work has been frequently reprinted. Sir Matthew Hale translated the life of Atticus, "with observations moral and political thereupon," which was published in 1677. The Rev. Mr Berwick has also subjoined a translation of that life, with notes, to his Life of Messala Corvinus, published in 1813.



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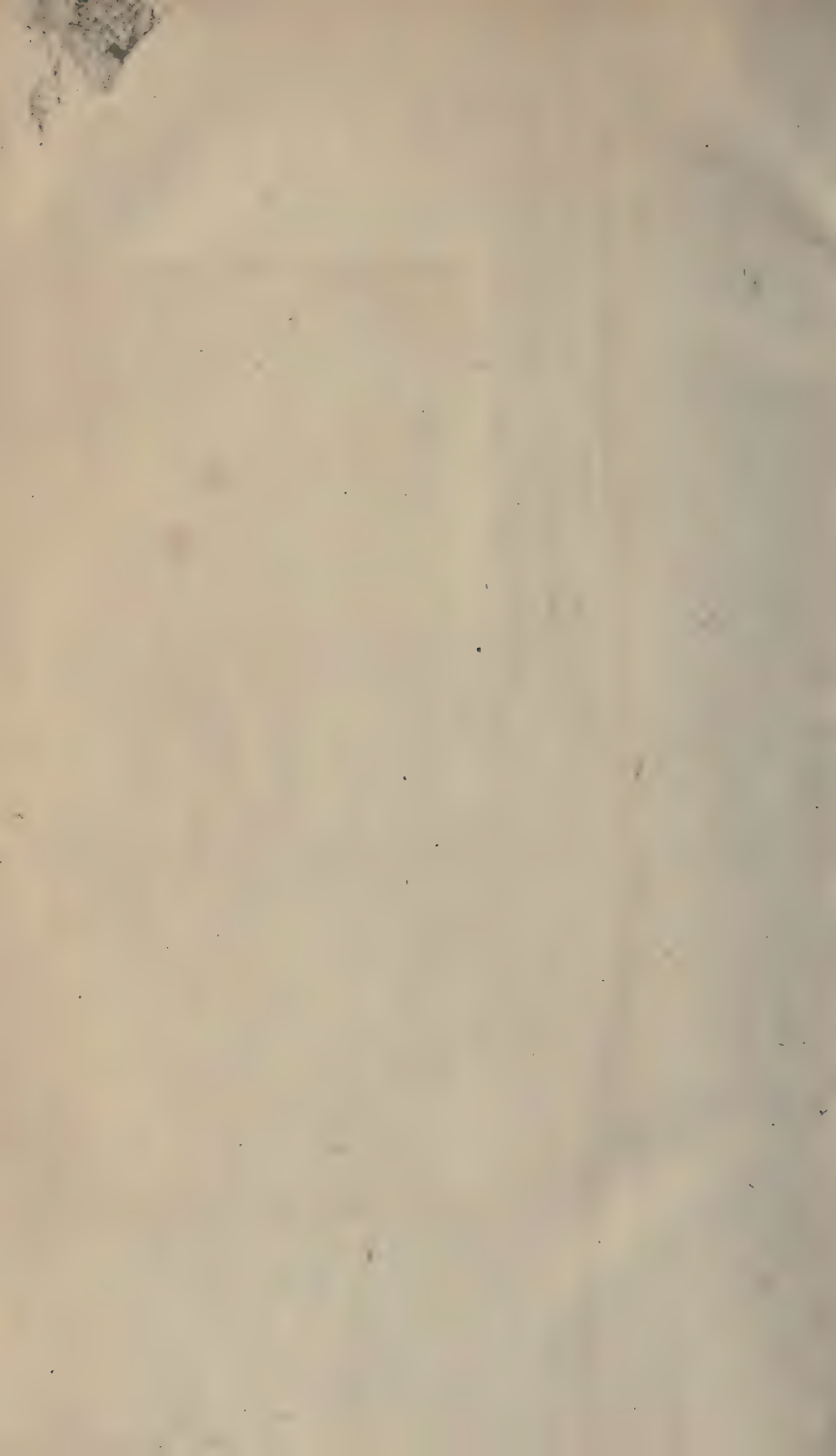
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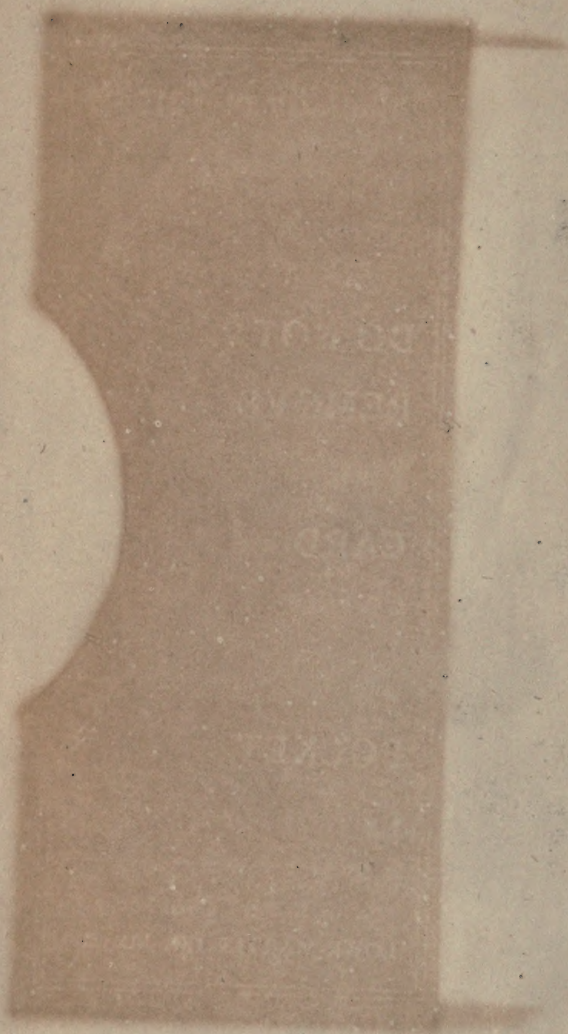












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